TWO EXTRAORDINARY SERIALS NEXT WEEK "THE MASTER OF THE MILLS," AND A THRILLING NEW STORY FOR BOYS, CALLED "A BATTLE FOR A MINE"

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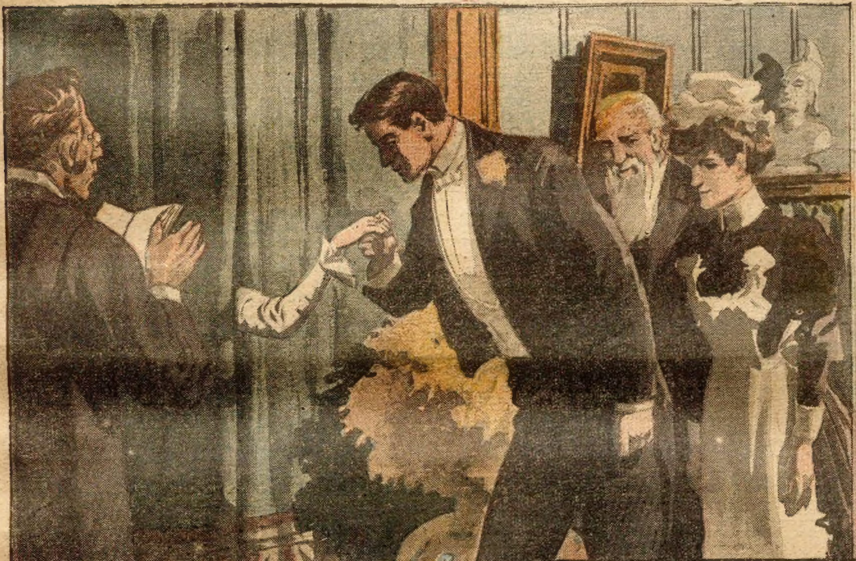
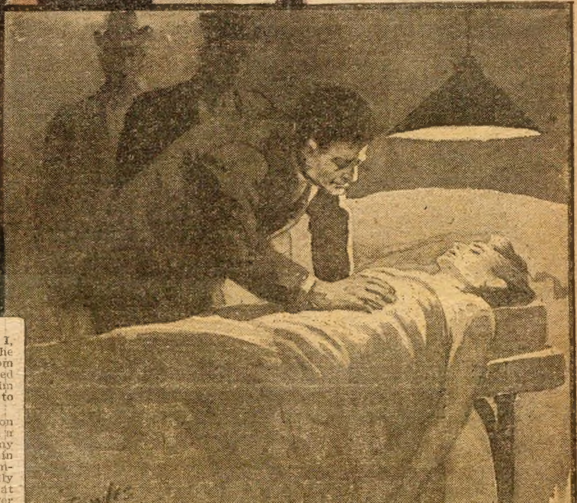
The Invisible Bride;

Or, THE MYSTERY OF A NIGHT

By T. C. Harbaugh





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CHAPTER I.

PLUNGE INTO MYSTERY.

WHEN I entered my humble lodgings on the night of the memorable third of June, I found on my table an envelope, postmarked at one of the branch postal stations of the city. Tearing it open, a bit of paper, cut from one of the prominent dailies, fell out and the next moment I was reading as follows:

> "WANTED—A young man who will ask no questions to marry a beautiful woman, sight unseen. Ten thousand dollars will be paid the bridegroom immediately after the ceremony. Address 'SILENCE,' this office."

When a man is desperate he will do almost anything for money. I do not mean by this that he will commit murder, or break into his neighbor's house and steal, but when pushed for funds he will often play a dangerous game which may threaten human life.

Had any one prophesied a few months before the opening of this romance that I, Miles Taverny, would descend from the crest of fortune's billows into the maelstrom of almost actual want, I would have laughed in his face, to say nothing of driving him from my door had he been so bold as to venture the prediction under my roof.

Unfortunate, not to say mad, speculation had dissipated the handsome legacy which a wealthy bachelor uncle had placed in my lap. I had left my well-appointed rooms in Paradise avenue and taken up much humbler lodgings in what was sarcastically known as Misery Row. My attendance at the club had ceased. I could not longer keep pace with my fellow members. I don't know that they cared much, though when I had money I was "a hail fellow well met," and at twenty-six, in good health, but with an empty purse, I was slipping in and out of Misery Row, taking care to avoid those who had known me in my better days.

Under other circumstances I would have thrown the advertisement into the grate, but now things had changed. A wife and ten thousand dollars! That was something, especially the ten thousand. I read the clipping again and again till every letter seemed burned into the tablets of my brain.

There was an air of mystery about the advertisement that added fuel to the growing flame. I was to ask no questions. No doubt everything had been arranged. But why all this secrecy? Why was a husband to be bought and who was the mysterious woman who had been thus strangely thrown upon the matrimonial market.

The more I thought over the matter, with the clipping looking me in the face from my table, the more I was anxious to see the adventure to an end. In a few moments I was seated at the table penning an answer to the call.

When I had posted my letter I was tempted to go downtown and shadow the newspaper office in hopes of seeing who was to call for the mail belonging to "Silence," but, knowing that this might prove an endless task and fearing to run into some of my old-time friends deterred me from doing so.

It was with some anxiety, not to say curiosity, that I waited for a reply.

It came the following day in the evening delivery and I hastened to open the envelope. After all I might not be the chosen one; I expected to be informed that the lucky man had been selected and I would be left to continue on in my precarious existence in Misery Row.

What, then, was my surprise when I was requested to call at Number 99 Holden square at three o'clock the following day.

Promptly at the hour I presented myself at the door of a well-to-do house, which looked like one of the many apartment buildings one finds in every modern city. The surroundings were good and I felt much at home, for I had lately dwelt amid such.

The door, in response to my ring, was opened by a youngish woman, who admitted me without a word and, turning deftly on her heel, led me down a wide hall to a door which she pulled ajar, at the same time motioning me to go forward. I entered a room not very light, owing to some heavy curtains, but I soon discovered that the apartment was well furnished with rich but antique furniture, and the carpet was so thickly velvet that one's feet sank in the soft depths without the slightest noise.

Presently a door across the room opened noiselessly and I was face to face with a man of sixty. It would be almost impossible to describe him. I had seldom seen one in any way like him. He did not look like one who had ten thousand dollars to bestow upon a young man who was willing to become a party to the plan outlined in the advertisement. He was rather portly, but evidently not a man who belonged to the business community, neither did he look like one in even moderate circumstances. He seemed above that.

Advancing toward me he held out his hand which I took and then he dropped into a chair opposite me.

"I am glad to see you, Mr. Taverny," said he in well modulated tones. "You have come in response to our letter?"

I answered yes.

"You are willing, then, to accept the conditions outlined in the advertisement?"

Determined to go to the end of my path I answered that I would not have come had I not been willing to see the end of the game.

"We are not taking up with every Tom, Dick and Harry," continued the man, with a faint smile. "We have looked up your record"—I shuddered—"and have found it good indeed."

Over-flattered by these words, I bowed and waited for him to proceed.

"This is not a matter of the moment," he went on. "It means more than the most discerning person can foresee."

"But, sir——"

He held up his finger with a little laugh.

"Remember! you are to ask no questions," said he. "That is one of the main features of the affair. You are to receive ten thousand dollars the moment you have become a benedict."

"The young lady——"

"The young lady is a person of worth and most excellent family," he interrupted. "I am quite sure she will be happy to become the bride of Mr. Miles Taverny."

"Thank you, sir."

I was on the eve of breaking the injunction and asking a question which had risen to my lips when, noticing this, my companion rose and held out his hand.

"Everything is arranged, sir," said he, as if I had fully consented in so many words. "You will be here in this room at ten o'clock tonight. You will come unattended. The ceremony will take place at eleven. I am glad to be able to thus befriend you, Mr. Taverny. You will come?"

"I will come," said I with determination. "You can depend on me, Mr.——"

"Never mind the name," he smiled. "We shall expect you, sir."

With this he moved toward the door and the next moment I was in the hall.

It took me ten minutes to collect myself. What had I done? After all why had I entered into this strange, unheard-of compact? What other mysteries lay beyond the singular altar I did not know. I was to wed a young woman at eleven o'clock that night. I was not to see the face of my bride. I did not even know her name and her lineage was unknown to me as the laws of the Medes and Persians.

Before I left the neighborhood I ventured to make some inquiries concerning the tenants of No. 99 Holden square. Stepping into a fruiterer's across the street, I bought some tropical fruit and ventured out a little. The little spectacled vendor said he did not know who lived in No. 99. He believed several families inhabited the place. It was all right, though, a house of the most excellent reputation. No, he had never seen a young lady about the premises and but once or twice a gentleman.

Back in Misery Row I went over the adventure of the afternoon.

Why not repudiate the whole affair? I was bound by nothing save a promise which might easily be broken. Perhaps after all it was a trap designed to involve me in questionable transactions, but there was the great mystery that hung over it all, the unseen bride, the ten thousand dollars and what not?

"I'll see the end of the tangle if it takes my life!" I exclaimed. "In any event I won't even be expected to live with the woman thus strangely thrust upon me. We will separate at the altar and after awhile she can seek legal separation and that will end the incident."

In the midst of my cogitations, and just when I was about to consult my wardrobe, the door opened and a young girl entered. Milly was my landlady's niece, a good looking young lady with the deepest blue eyes I had ever seen and a vivacious nature.

"Gentleman to see you, Mr. Taverny," said the girl.

"When, Milly?"

"Just after you went out."

"Did he leave his card?"

"No. He left a note, though?"

She went to the mantel and pulled a slip of paper from behind the clock.

"I thought best to put it where no one could find it for, being unsealed, it might not be intended for every eye."

"Thank, you Milly. You're worth your weight in gold," said I.

"And my weight is just one forty-five!" she replied with a fascinating laugh.

Then, as she bowed herself out I drew a chair up to the table and opened a note which was to set me thinking.

CHAPTER II.

THE UNSEEN BRIDE.

Several years had passed since I had heard from my friend Homer Glidden, and when I opened the note and saw his well-known signature at the bottom of the few lines I started and became interested at once.

Somewhat of a rolling stone but a good fellow withal, Glidden had at last turned detective and had made some famous catches which had brought him into prominence not only in this country, but in Europe. One of his most celebrated trails was that which led to the solution of the crime known as the Burton Mystery, and one would have fancied that Glidden would have lost his head over his success, but the fame which came to him did not flustrate him in the least.

I had seen him but once since this affair and that was on the wharf upon the eve of his departure for Europe and now here was a note from him.

It was so brief and so strange that, though I read the lines at a glance, I felt my heart beat fast against its bars.

This is what confronted me in Glidden's hand writing:

"Taverny, old fellow—Just back. Will see you later. Do nothing rash, and for heaven's sake keep out of all entanglements. GLIDDEN."

Is it a wonder that I read and reread this note with varying emotions coupled with mystery. What did Glidden know of the strange compact into which I had just entered? Having but just returned from across the sea, how could he even surmise that I was in danger of any kind, to say nothing of my secret which so far I had kept to myself? It was a mystery which grew darker while I gazed at the writing lying on my table.

Despairing of solving the tangle, I at last put the letter in my pocket and sallied from the house. If I could only find Glidden I might have his mysterious letter explained. I still had some hours till the wedding.

I went to his old lodgings, but the landlady seemed surprised to hear me inquire for Glidden, and I was forced to turn away baffled at the outset. Where to look for him next I did not know. He was erratic in his habits and might have changed his lodgings for a purpose upon his return.

The long shadows of the closing day found me in a great dilemma.

Every tick of the clock brought me nearer to the consummation of the scheme to which I had lent myself. The house on Holden square had for me a fascination which I could not shake off. A wife and ten thousand dollars awaited me there and I found myself lurking in the vicinity by the lighting of the lamps.

I would go through the ceremony and see Glidden afterward. If danger threatened, perhaps he could explain, and with a strange wife, one whom I was not to see, shouldered upon me, I fancied that I was entering upon a life chapter which was more romantic than the wildest tales of fiction.

Stationing myself in a spot from which I could observe No. 99 Holden square, I began my vigils.

That part of the city, as I have already said, was well-to-do and the adobe of people quite wealthy. It was but one remove from Murray Hill, the home of the millionaires.

The house looked dark and uninhabitable. The curtains were drawn and not the slightest sign of light could be distinguished. If my future bride was beyond the brick walls she was as invisible as the dead rulers of Egypt.

I began to be noticed by people who passed the doorway into which I had dropped for the purpose of watching the house. This, under other circumstances, would have been annoying, but I stood it out and never removed my gaze from the premises opposite.

I heard a nearby clock toll the hours and yet no one had climbed the steps of No. 99 and opened the door.

Baffled in my quest I at last turned away and at the next corner nearly collided with a woman, who fell back with a little cry at sight of me.

She was dressed in unrelieved black and the moment I caught sight of her face a thrill seemed to pervade my whole frame.

I had met this woman before and but once in my life. She had a face which lingers long in one's memory and I wondered what fate had brought her to that particular part of the city and especially at that time.

She uttered no word as she recoiled, but gave me a look and, darting off, was soon lost to sight.

"Sara Thornton!" said I as I tried to follow her with my eyes. "If you are in any way connected with this adventure of mine I will know later on."

And I did.

At last near the stroke of ten I turned back toward the mysterious house in Holden square.

The hour had arrived for the adventure and as I mounted the steps of No. 99 I mechanically felt for the weapon I had brought along for use in an emergency.

The door was quickly opened at my knock, as if the servant had been waiting for it, and once more I stood in the long, wide hall. It was semi-dark as before.

This time I was conducted to a room opposite the one in which I had the interview with the strange man, and told to be seated.

As I moved toward a settee in one corner of the large room which was well furnished, I noticed that it had been partitioned off by a heavy curtain of a darkish material. This curtain extended from the ceiling to the carpet where it ended in heavy folds.

While I took notice of the room and its appointments I heard a hidden clock strike, and, counting the strokes, I knew that the supreme hour had arrived.

As the last sound died away a door was opened and two men stepped into the room.

One was the person with whom I had entered into the singular compact, and the other was a clerical-looking individual, who carried himself like one of the holy church. My bargainer advanced with a smile at the corners of his mouth and held out his hand.

"I am glad to see you, sir," said he with a grin as he threw a swift glance toward his companion, who carried a book in one hand. "Punctuality is an excellent trait."

"Most excellent," remarked the minister, and with this he executed a bow.

"I'll admit the witness," resumed the man of No. 99, turning to the door, which he opened.

The young woman who had admitted me to the strange house, entered and stood with her gaze riveted upon the floor.

"There is yet time, sir," said the head of the house, addressing me. "If you want to repudiate your bargain you can, sir."

The girl raised her eyes to mine in pleading, but I avoided her gaze.

"I am not of that sort," I returned. "You can proceed with the ceremony."

"You hear that?" he said to the minister. "He is willing to enter into the state of matrimony."

"I understand," was the answer as the minister opened the book and glanced toward the curtain.

What passed during the next few moments I can hardly describe.

I know that a hand was thrust through a rent in the dark drapery, that I clasped it and held it while the minister made the owner of that hand my wife.

As the man of holy orders pronounced us man and wife, in solemn tones, our hands fell apart, the one which I had clasped vanished and the rent closed. As I turned away I happened to meet the gaze of the young witness. It seemed full of pity, but for whom? Was it for me, fool that I was, or was she giving the pity of a woman's heart to the unseen bride of that eventful night?

"This way, sir," said the voice of the strange man, calling me back to myself and the startling present.

We left that room and crossed the hall beyond. The minister did not follow us into the room where my companion turned upon me with a face of whiteness.

"I thank you very much, sir," he said, rather haughtily. "You went through the ceremony splendidly. I think you should be congratulated. Now, sir, we will complete the transaction."

With this he went to a mahogany desk at one side of the room and threw back the polished lid.

I watched him in silence as he took a roll of bills from the desk and counted them rapidly with agile fingers.

"Here," said he, pushing the money across the table. "You can verify my count if you desire. You will find ten one thousand dollar bills in the roll."

I did not count the crisp papers, but gathered them up, thrust the whole into an inner pocket and looked straight into his face.

"When shall this strange bridal be consummated?" I asked.

"There!" cried my companion. "You were to ask no questions. That is a part of the compact. You have your ten thousand, and I trust all parties are satisfied. We are. I shall now bid you good night, sir."

Almost before I knew it I was in the hallway, from which ascended a broad staircase. My companion held the door open for me. As I bowed a good night I glanced up the flight and saw at the top, dimly outlined, the figure of the girl who had witnessed the mysterious marriage. She seemed to be pitying me again, and one of her fingers touched her pallid lips.

CHAPTER III.

THE TANGLE DEEPENS.

I am inclined to ask the reader to imagine, if he can, my feelings as I walked from the house in Holden square.

It seemed to me that I had played the part of bridegroom in one of the strangest marriages that ever had been performed. I had not seen my bride, did not even know her name and her past was as mysterious to me as the buried archive of the forgotten cities of the Orient.

Fool I had been, and all for money! It is true that the sum handed me in consideration of my part in the compact would keep the wolf from the door and I could change my lodgings from Misery Row back to Paradise avenue, where I could come out once more in better plumage and, mayhap, spend a few hours again at the club, but a new puzzle confronted me.

Why had all this secrecy been woven round the nocturnal ceremony in Holden square? Why had the young woman—I was sure she was young from the hand I had taken, and beautiful, too, for all that—been forced to wed one whom she had never seen and whom she did not see when she became a bride?

With these things in my head I went back to my lodgings. Throwing myself into a chair, I drew forth the bills and cast them upon the table.

They were bright and crisp, ten of them, and looked as if they had just come from the press. I picked them up one by one and observed that they were all of one series and consecutively numbered. I might possibly discover from what bank they had been drawn and thus arrive at the identity of the master of ceremonies in the house in Holden square, but was the attempt worth the candle?

I fell to examining the bills so closely that I was unaware that I was not alone until a slight noise caused me to look up.

Milly, the maid, stood before me. She flushed when she caught my eye and threatened to apologize when I took the words out of her mouth.

"No apologies, Milly," said I. "I must have dropped asleep."

"Not quite that, Mr. Taverny, but you seemed very busy counting your money."

I had hurriedly covered the little heap of cash with my hand, but the girl had already seen, so I withdrew it and beckoned her forward.

She uttered an exclamation of wonderment as her gaze alighted on the bills, and her eyes bulged with curiosity.

"You must have received a legacy, Mr. Taverny," she exclaimed. "I never saw so much money in all my life."

Of course she hadn't, for she had never been, so far as I knew, to Holden square where they paid people for entering into strange matrimonial alliances and where fools like Miles Taverny were rated at their true value.

"It is not a legacy, Milly," said I with a little laugh. "Would to Heaven it was," and as I sighed, the blue eyes of the girl transfixed me with renewed wonderment.

"Then you must have had a streak of good luck. You don't gamble, do you, Mr. Taverny?"

"Not I, Milly."

"I thought not. How beautiful those bills are! May I touch them?"

"Yes."

She took them up in her white hands and fonlded them one by one, stroking them as she laid them down again.

"You'll have something to bestow upon your bride one of these days," the girl said with a laugh that became her.

I started in spite of myself.

Poor Milly will never know how near she was to a great secret just then. It was on the tip of my tongue to tell her that I had received those bills for marrying, that very night, a woman sight unseen. I replied evasively to her remark and took up the bills again.

"Has any one been here during my absence?" I asked.

"I answered the door but once tonight," was the reply. "It was a woman who asked if you were in."

"A woman?" cried I.

"Yes."

"Did she leave her name?"

"No, Mr. Taverny."

"What was she like?"

"I could not make her out very well, for she tried, I thought, to be just a trifle mysterious, and as she was dressed in black and wore a veil, I failed to get a good look at her. She went off when I told her that you were out."

CONVINCING PROOF

OF THE VIRTUE OF

Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound

What is the use of procrastinating in the face of such evidence as the following letters represent? If you are a sick woman or know one who is, what sensible reason have you for not giving Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound a trial? For 30 years we have been publishing such testimonial letters as these—thousands of them —they are genuine and honest, too, every one of them.

Mrs. S. J. Barber says:

"I think Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound is the best medicine in the world for women—and I feel it my duty to let others know the good it has done for me.

Three years ago I had a tumor which the doctor said would have to be removed by an operation or I could not live more than a year, or two, at most. I wrote Mrs. Pinkham, at Lynn, Mass., for advice, and took 14 bottles of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and today the tumor is gone and I am a perfectly well woman. I hope my testimonial will be of benefit to others." — Mrs. S. J. BARBER, Scott, N. Y.

Mrs. E. F. Hayes says:

"I was under the doctor's treatment for a fibroid tumor. I suffered with pain, soreness, bloating, and could not walk or stand on my feet any length of time. I wrote to Mrs. Pinkham for advice, followed her directions and took Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. To-day I am a well woman, the tumor was expelled and my whole system strengthened. I advise all women who are afflicted with tumors or female troubles to try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound." — Mrs. E. F. HAYES, 1890 Washington St., Boston, Mass.

Mrs. George May says:

"No one knows what I have suffered from female troubles, neuralgia pain, and backache. My doctor said he could not give me anything to cure it. Through the advice of a friend I began to use Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and the pain soon disappeared. I continued its use and am now in perfect health. Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has been a God-send to me as I believe I should have been in my grave if it had not been for Mrs. Pinkham's advice and Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound." —Mrs. GEORGE MAY, 86 4th Ave., Paterson, N. J.

Mrs. W. K. Housh says:

"I have been completely cured of a severe female trouble by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and want to recommend it to all suffering women." — Mrs. W. K. HOUSH, 7 Eastview Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio.

Because your case is a difficult one, doctors having done you no good, do not continue to suffer without giving Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound a trial. It surely has cured many cases of female ills, such as inflammation, ulceration, displacements, fibroid tumors, irregularities, periodic pains, backache, etc.

For 30 years Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has been the standard remedy for female ills. No sick woman does justice to herself who will not try this famous medicine. Made exclusively from roots and herbs, and has thousands of cures to its credit.

☞ Mrs. Pinkham invites all sick women to write her for advice. She has guided thousands to health free of charge. Address Mrs. Pinkham, Lynn, Mass.

LYDIA E PINKHAM

"Without saying that she would call again?"

"She left no word at all. I watched her a moment as she went down the street and when she turned the corner, of course she vanished."

"Very well, Milly," said I, "perhaps she will call when I am in," and with this I leaned back in my chair while the girl stole to the door, and in another moment I was the sole occupant of the little room.

The woman in black again!

Doubtless she was the same one I had encountered just before the mysterious marriage and if so, I doubted not my ability to uncover her.

As I have already related, I had met this woman but once and then for so brief a time that I could not imagine why she had come into my life especially at such a time.

No sooner had Milly's footsteps died away in the corridor than I sprang to my feet and glanced at my watch. It lacked a few moments till midnight and I was something of a night-owl when the club was in session.

For some months I had not passed the doors of the Golden Club, and no sooner had I left the house than I bent my steps in that direction. I knew that not a few of the habitutes of the club had a habit of making a night of it in the rooms of the establishment and I would again cross its threshold. I was flush once more, but at what a price!

Half an hour later I pushed open the door of the Golden Club and strode through the brilliantly lighted hallway.

I felt, in the flush of the moment, that I had come back to my own again.

As I entered the main room, where some of the members were indulging in games of cards and chance, I heard my name called and went over to one of the tables. As I paused there, one of the players threw down his "hand" and rose.

"I'm glad to see you back, Miles!" he exclaimed as he ran his arm through mine and we walked to a secluded corner. "There's a good deal of the romantic in you and here's a chance to exercise it."

As my friend finished he took from his waistcoat pocket a bit of crumpled paper, at which I started even before he opened it.

"I showed this to Haverly a while ago. He writes, you know, and has been bothering me to give him a plot for his next book. I wonder what it all means?"

To my chagrin he unfolded the newspaper clipping and placed in my hand the mysterious advertisement which had inveigled me into the strangest matrimonial tangle that ever was.

It was with difficulty that I could keep my head.

"Ten thousand dollars and a wife sight unseen," continued Walker. "Did you ever see or hear of anything like this?"

"I never did, Jack."

"Do you know what I did?" he went on. "I answered this strange advertisement."

"You did?" I exclaimed.

"Yes, but I was a little late."

"How late?"

"I received a reply in the last mail saying that the right man had been found. I wonder who the lucky fool was?"

Jack Walker was looking me straight in the face and I felt my cheeks tingle with sudden pallor.

"Would you let me see the letter you received?" said I.

"Certainly, here it is," and there was placed in my hand the reply to which he had just referred.

I at once recognized the handwriting, for I had seen it before, and after reading the letter, which was brief, I handed it back to Walker.

"Glidden's come back," suddenly exclaimed Walker, "and I thought he would drop in tonight."

"Well?"

"He likes to unravel mysteries and I thought of putting him onto this one."

"Don't!" cried I.

"Why not, Miles? It would give us some amusement."

"I think it a little out of Glidden's line."

"Oh, no, everything's fish that comes into his net," was the reply. "I fancy he would like this puzzle. It is a little out of the old rut, no murder mystery, you know, just a little social affair with enough of the mysterious about it to try Glidden's wonderful powers of elucidation."

I felt like turning away without another word.

"Well," commented Walker, finally, "I'll stake my head that the fellow who is to become the bridegroom needed the money more than he did a wife and the bait caught him."

I bit my lips under his words and changed the conversation, though I feared that my looks betrayed me.

"Yes," said I to myself, "the fool needed the cash. The moth was caught by the flame!" and five minutes later, without a single explanation to any of my old associates, I left the club to become enmeshed in some of the most exciting events that ever followed a mysterious marriage.

CHAPTER IV.

HAND OF THE DEAD.

One would naturally think that the catalog of startling and mysterious events of that memorable night had reached an end, but the strangest was yet to come.

When I left the rooms of the Golden Club with my momentous secret locked in my bosom, it was with the intenion of returning direct to my rooms in Misery Row, rooms, now that fortune had once more smiled on me, I intended to give up for better quarters.

I desired to avoid Glidden, the detective, fearing that should Walker set him upon the trail of the advertisement he had clipped, he (Glidden) would come to me with the story and worm from me an inkling at least of the affair.

It was past midnight when I came down the steps of the club with the wind in my face and set my steps toward home.

The sultriness of the night had kept many thousands on the street, instead of trying to court slumber in their rooms and I found myself jostled on every side.

Hoping to escape recognition, for I was already surfeited with notoriety, I turned off into a side street as soon as possible and quickened my steps."

I had not proceeded far on the narrow thoroughfare when I felt my sleeve plucked and a voice exclaimed:

"By Jove! this is luck."

I recoiled and looked into the face that confronted me in the glare of a street light.

"You Ramon?" I cried.

"Why not? Don't you know I'm an all-night bird?" was the reply.

"I hadn't thought of that," said I. "You're out late, like myself, I see."

"Just come from the morgue. They've picked up something pretty down there."

"Some unfortunate?"

"I guess that's what you might call her," said the nocturnal tramp. "It's worth looking at, I tell you."

Knowing that the last resting place of the unfortunates of the city was not far off I plucked Roman's sleeve and said I would go with him. He turned quickly and slouched off.

"They haven't recognized her—not as yet," he chattered as he hurried on. "She's no common creature, I tell you, Mr. Taverny."

A few minutes later I stood beyond the portals of the city's dead-house, talking to those in charge.

"I'm glad you've come," said the main officer to me. "You furnished a clew to the old gentleman we found dead on the boulevard last summer and maybe you can do us some good now."

"Ramon, here, says you've got another mystery on your hands."

"It looks that way, but we're used to that," with a smile. "Come this way. The last reporter has gone to write up the latest find with the usual embellishments. You'll have the place all to yourself, Mr. Taverny."

I accompanied the superintendent into the gruesome place where several human derelicts lay on the cold slabs. The air about the place was not the purest, despite the efforts of the attaches of the morgue to render it bearable, and I was directed to one of the stones upon which lay the sheeted figure of the latest "find."

"This is the one," said Ramon in a whisper as with pallid face he came nearer. "They didn't fish her from the river this time, but——"

His sentence was arrested by the superintendent pulling the white shroud from the face, and I bent forward.

It was a beautiful face I saw, that of a young woman who should have lived. The features were regular and composed, and while I gazed, the voice of Ramon, the all-nighter, came again to my ears.

"None o' your common trash," said he, glancing up into my face. "She's seen better days, and——"

Goaded by a strang curiosity I had suddenly torn the sheet from the entire figure and uttered a cry.

"Do you know her?" asked the superintendent.

I did not speak.

"Mr. Glidden, the detective, dropped in here a few moments ago and took a look."

"Glidden?" and I, scarcely know why I uttered the name.

"Yes, you know Glidden?"

"Did he recognize her?" I asked, eagerly.

"Not for sure," was the reply. "He's just returned from Europe, you know?"

"Yes."

"Went over there at the request of the Scotland Yard men and has been on a perplexing trail from what he let fall while here. I suspect that the quarry backtracked on Glidden and that that's why he's here again. Pardon me, Mr. Taverny, but I thought——"

"You thought what?"

"I thought from your exclamation that you had seen the subject in life."

"I have not said so, eh?"

"No, but——"

Seeing that my gaze had fallen again to the cold body on the marble slab the superintendent broke off his sentence and remained silent.

My gaze was riveted not on the face nor the superb bust, but upon the hands.

Where had I seen them before?

"What fine hands!" remarked the superintendent as if he could read my thoughts. "I've had many fine ones here, but those surpass them all."

There was one hand whose contour was burned into my brain. I had seen it a hundred times since my strange adventure in the house in Holden square. It had been thrust through a rent in a heavy curtain and I had held it for a minute while a minister made me the husband of its owner.

It was, as the reader knows, all I had seen of my mysterious bride. I had said to myself that the owner of such a hand must be beautiful of face; it could not be otherwise. There was culture in the shape of the hand, and, therefore, its owner must be one far removed from the lower walks of life.

And now I had found that hand again! I could not be mistaken, and yet—but why speculate?

"Where did you find her?" I asked the superintendent, looking up abruptly.

"Sergeant Bossom found her in the little park that opens from Holden square."

"What? That's a good neighborhood," said I.

"Yes, and that's what makes the case one of the deepest mystery. We don't call it a suicide, for one cannot think that a girl of such beauty would deliberately take her own life."

"Murder, think you, then?"

"Doctor Brown, who made the examination, is undecided, but why do you pay so much attention to the hand, Mr. Taverny—because it's so perfect?"

"I was on the eve of saying: "No, because it's the hand of my wife," when I checked myself.

"Perfect hands have always had a charm for me," said I. "I may be a little daffy on that subject. So Doctor Brown cannot find why she is here?"

"He hasn't found out yet," was the reply. "There's her garments yonder."

I went over to the case where the clothes of the subject hung and took them down one by one.

"You found no marks on these?" said I, turning my head toward the superintendent.

"We've searched them and so did Glidden and when he can't find any clew one might as well give up, don't you think?"

I did not reply, but restored the last garment to its place on the hook.

With another look, not at the face but the perfect hand which held me so strangely, I turned away. Ramon slouched out at my side.

"What do you think," said I

"What do you think, Mr. Miles?" he simpered.

"It's a mystery," said I and with this closed up like a clam.

Back to my lodgings in Misery Row with the first breezes of the new morning stirring my curtains, I at last threw myself upon my couch and dropped off into a troubled slumber.

All at once I heard my name called in no uncertain tones, and upon sitting up I found Milly standing in the middle of the room.

"He wants to know if he may come up, sir," said the girl.

"Who's downstairs?"

"A man who wouldn't give his name, but he looks like the one who left the note, sir."

"Tell him to come," and rising, I went to the table and waited for my visitor.

Presently footsteps sounded on the staircase and the door opened to admit Homer Glidden.

"It's an early call, Miles," said the detective with a little laugh, "but I'm an all-nighter, as you know. You got my note? Yes? Of course you've done nothing rash? You're single yet? I've picked out a wife for you—just the beauty. I——"

I held up my hand and Glidden stopped.

"It's too late, Glidden," cried I. "The moth has been burned, and all for gold. I was married last night!"

Homer Glidden's look became an incredulous stare.

(Continued next week.)

Wanted to Know.

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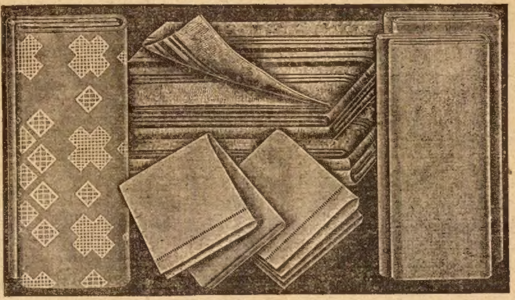

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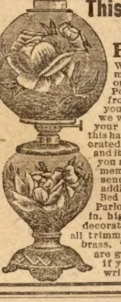

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IN STRANGE SEAS:

Or, The Flying Dutchman's Daughter

By WILLIAM H. MANNING

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Begun in No. 6, February 5. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LAND OF MYSTERY.

I CAME to my feet with the idea strong in my mind that I must save Vanderdecken's daughter, and, without a thought of how matters were going with my shipmates, I followed where the abductor had gone. Reaching the rail I saw the girl in a struggle with her enemy, but he did not have it all his own way there. Even in that crisis I was impressed with the fact that she was as much at home in the water as a fish, and her easy movements bothered him.

Not wanting to lose any time in diving, I swung over the bulwark and dropped from arms-length. I struck by the man's side, and as his intended prey flashed away from him, still like a graceful fish, he and I had it to ourselves again, and when I laid hold of him we were in a grapple and soon fighting for mastery.

I had gained a good hold, and from the first it went my way, especially as I proved to be much the better swimmer. After a few writhings I had practically subdued him when the girl swam near and presented her earnest face to us both.

"Outlander!" she cried, "go back to your kennel!"

The words were for him, but they passed unheeded. He was trying to break my hold, and this kept him busy. His struggles were energetic, but they availed nothing, and as he tried only to save himself I felt that the fight was about over. She took the same view of the case.

"Will you go," she demanded, "if you are left alone?"

The outlander grew idle, sullen anger in his face. He looked about him, and then a boat—not hers—appeared from the larboard beam of the Polly, and within it were his followers, beaten and in rapid retreat. Then, too, Bijah came splashing overboard, eager to aid me, and the outlander yielded sulkily.

"I'll go!" he growled. "I'm done. Let me go!"

"Be so good as to free him, mynheer," requested the fair companion of my adventure. "Then, outlaw, get hence!"

It seemed best that she be obeyed, so I released my hold. The boat was coming near, and the outlander swam to it, lifted his arms and was drawn over the gunwale. Once there, he tumbled under a thwart and lay still, but his mates again fell to their oars and the boat moved toward the bight of the bay.

Bijah was hard by, his face aglow with enthusiasm.

"All over, sir!" he explained cheerfully. "Last man gone, and we didn't kill one, but I guess there will be a few headaches for a day or so. Ahoy, above, cast a line and let us get out of the drink!"

Solon and Jerry were both at the rail, and the lines splashed hard by us, whereupon we first made sure the girl was served. When she was drawn to the deck the carpenter insisted that I should follow, and then took his own turn.

In a few minutes from the going of the assailants all our party were together inboard.

"As pretty a set-to as ever I saw!" cried Bijah heartily. "Mr. Stanford, sir, you did yourself proud."

"Hardly!" I replied. "Justice compels me to say you did three-quarters of all the work."

"If Chips can spurt his opinion free, sir, I'll say 'bosh!' You are too modest, captain!"

It was natural talk in the time of victory, and Solon added his word, but our attention was turned in a new channel as the girl suddenly moved to Whitebone's side and took his hand warmly.

"Why, it's Jerry!" she exclaimed wonderingly.

"So it is, Miss Gretchen," Whitebone replied.

"But we thought you were dead, years ago."

"I lived, and all the while I have been trying to return to my people. I did not forget my cradle oath."

"And you brought this ship to save us! Noble Jerry, great man, faithful friend! Truly, our people will hail you as our deliverer."

At the beginning of this surprising talk, their first surprise dwindling a little, both had been eager of face, and full of delight. The last words, however, meant something to Whitebone not thought of by their speaker, and he grew graver and glanced at me half-uneasily. I did not interrupt, for, together with Bijah and Solon, I was too much astonished to say anything. After all my sailing with Jerry, I knew him in a new role, a friend of the people of South Amsterdam.

Surely, the carpenter had been right when he asserted that things were bewitched. How could I understand the situation otherwise?

"Captain," added Gretchen, "I know you now think you did well in sailing here with Mynheer Whitebone."

"As for that," I responded, "things are a good deal mixed, and explanations all around will fall in later, but other points demand immediate attention. You are so wet that you may take cold, and—Im sorry to say we have not an article of wear for you, except men's."

"Oh! you needn't care," she said, laughing. "We never take cold in this region. I am as used to being wet as a fish, or almost that. Pray give it no thought. We must take heed to business. I want you to meet my father."

"Is Mynheer Vanderdecken well?" asked Jerry quickly.

"Quite well."

"And all the others?"

"Some have died since you left us, chief of whom was Hans Buyderschaftner, but you know he was very old."

"Did I not see Gottlieb Spanschold among those who attacked us—yes, and why did they attack?"

"Gottlieb was there. For two years we have had an outlander among us, and he set some of our men astray. All who were in the boat were outlaws, and no longer of us. The outlander has bewitched them."

Bijah had been listening with open eyes.

"Did I understand you to mention Vanderdecken?" he asked feebly.

"Yes, my father, the Flying Dutchman."

"Heaven save us!" gasped the carpenter. "And he lived over a hundred years ago!"

Whitebone had said something to Gretchen in aside, and these words passed unheard by them, but Bijah's stout courage had taken a fall and Solon drew back. Like myself, they were ill-prepared to meet, or even to hear of men aged nearly or quite a hundred and fifty years. When nature was violated, witchcraft surely reigned.

Gretchen, serenely confident of the situation as she supposed it to be, suddenly stirred into new animation.

"Jerry," she pursued, "will you not please order your captain to bring this great craft into the bay and let all the people see it? My father will want to inspect it closely, and then preparations will go forward for our departure from South Amsterdam. Sir," and she now turned to me, "we shall hail Mr. Whitebone as next to the Divine, and you shall have the respect due you. Also, sir, you are lucky to have such a master as Mr. Whitebone!"

"Wait a bit, mademoiselle!" exclaimed Jerry. "You misunderstood the situation. I am not master here, nor have I brought this ship as you think, and neither are these men in my pay. Only a few days back I was a shipwrecked sailor, picked up by this vessel, and, now, I am not even a seaman under pay, for I have never signed the articles. Mr. Stanford is master, not servant."

"Oh!" cried the girl, flushing. "I surely have been much mistaken. But, surely, you sailed here to rescue us?"

"The storm brought us, miss."

"As for rescue," said I, interrupting, "you shall have all the help you need, and if it is the desire to leave here, and we can find our way—I doubt not this will be easy—we will take you away."

"The Flying Dutchman has thirty children."

I heard faint exclamations from Bijah and Solon, but I had grown prepared for anything, and I made ready reply.

"The Cousin Polly will carry thirty, if they are not too fastidious as to quarters. But, miss, day is fully dawned, and I shall be glad to meet Mynheer Vanderdecken. Will you bring him here?"

"Why not yourself go ashore?"

"The pirates have already almost captured the ship. I am not disposed to give them further chance."

"You need have no fears, sir. Those miserable men dare make no attack by day; they are creatures of the night, a very few who have gone wrong, and do ill deeds in the darkness. You will see them no more while light lasts. The outlander is prudent, and Gottlieb Spanschold, Daniel Graaf and the others also hide by day. They will not molest the ship by day."

"Bear in mind, sir," put in Bijah, "that we have guns somewhere below, with powder and shot. Solon and I can hold the Polly all right, can't we, messmate?"

"Ay, ay!" Solon agreed.

There was logic in this plan, so I sent the two men to get the implements of war. The guns proved to be very good specimens of the sort in use, and the ammunition was satisfactory. Making sure the weapons were clean, we loaded them, and the preliminary was done with. Next, the ship's boat was lowered, and Jerry and I entered. Gretchen returned to her pikarro, and we put away from the Polly.

The pirates had disappeared, and nobody else was to be seen, but, though I felt no timidity, I became inclined to learn more from Whitebone.

"Are you sure we will be received in a friendly way, Jerry?"

"Absolutely sure, sir," he replied.

"How far have we to go?"

"Just beyond the farther point. The village is there."

"They may resent the coming of outsiders."

"Why, sir, they have prayed for a hundred years and more that outsiders would come. It is their great desire to escape from this wretched land. Resent it? No, no, sir—they will go mad with delight when it is known a ship is in the offing."

"Why have they never left of themselves? The sea is open."

"They had no ship, and the few attempts to escape singly, by men seeking to help the whole community, came to nothing. All who went out in little boats—we could build nothing larger—ended in the adventurers being drowned, or so we suppose."

"How did you get out?"

"That is the odd part of it, sir. I was fishing on a raft, and was carried away in a gale, drifting a long while until I got into the track of vessels, and so was picked up by a ship that had doubled the Horn, and taken to Havana."

"Why have you never told of these castaway people?"

"I did, at first, but I was laughed at freely. Then I grew cautious and held my tongue. I don't blame them, though. It was much to believe, sir."

Mentally admitting that he was right I dropped the talk. Gretchen was flitting along before us in her pikarro, while we pulled as best we could, and so we entered the bay. At its further end the land fell away, and we had sudden view of a village. In a degree it was like other collections of houses, and I did not look long. We reached the land, which was a gentle rise with crude piers of rock, and there made our boat fast by her painter. At last we stood on the land of mystery, close to the habitations of the people of mystery.

"Come with me, captain," requested the girl, smiling happily. "Our people still stay inside, for it is early, but they are doubtless at breakfast. My father will be astir. Come to his house at once. I want," she added, with pretty dignity, "that you should see Mynheer Vanderdecken!"

"I shall be glad."

I said it quietly, but felt that the occasion was no common one. The fok'sle legends ran riot through my mind. If Vanderdecken had been an old, white-bearded man a hundred years before, when he was vainly struggling to double the Cape, what must he be now?

It did not occur to me then, but events were shaping to prove that the many sailors who gave the Cape of Good Hope as the scene of the Flying Dutchman's troubles were wrong, and the few who named Cape Horn, instead, were right.

Whitebone had something to call him elsewhere, his gaze wandering to a distant cottage, and he went that way, so I followed Gretchen alone. Past houses, small of size and crude of architecture, but spotlessly neat, we traversed the village without seeing a human being. Even the bark of a dog was denied us, and I felt a sudden depression. Possibly, after all, Bijah's talk of witchcraft had something in it.

We brought up at the largest of the dwellings, and my fair guide opened the door and entered. I followed, and she swung back a side door leading from the hall.

"Pray enter," she directed. "I will bring Mynheer Vanderdecken. "You will be glad to meet him," she added proudly, "for he is a great man."

"I don't doubt it, miss," I returned weakly.

She left me. I was in a room of fair size, its floor being carpetless and all ornamentation lacking, but strong, rough furniture was there, its pattern unlike any known to me, but very serviceable.

After five minutes I heard slow, heavy steps, and felt that I was about to look upon the oldest man living. Unless all was bewitchment, perhaps this would be a pleasure, so I faced the door. Gretchen flitted into view again, smiling, buoyant and happy.

"Captain," she announced, "this is Mynheer Vanderdecken!"

And he entered.

CHAPTER VIII.

TROUBLE CONFRONTS ME.

Surprise followed the entrance of the man. He wore a beard of generous proportions, but it was not white, and neither was his hair. Instead of the tottering patriarch of a century and a half I saw a robust, intelligent, fine-looking man, who seemed to be little more than fifty years old. Instead of

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witchcraft, I found myself in the midst of the plain and practical things of life.

Still stepping heavily, as befitted so large a man, but quickly, Vanderdecken advanced with outstretched hand, his eyes aglow and his kind face of friendly expression.

"Welcome, sir, welcome!" he exclaimed. "It is the most blessed moment of my life when I can greet you in my house. A thousand times, welcome! Ah, daughter, you have spoken truly—he has black hair and blue eyes!"

"And the ship is off the land," she added.

"Even so! Now, all will end well," Vanderdecken asserted. "I beg, sir, that you will let me be your host to the best of my poor ability. I think you are English?"

"American, which is about the same thing," I answered.

"All here speak Dutch, German, English and French, and all these languages are equally familiar to us, being taught from our cradles. I mention this merely to say that I want to speak with you in the tongue most to your liking. Sir, if we were not taught in Sacred Writ to bow only to the Most High, I would kneel at your feet and bless you. We have, for generations, been prisoners of the South Pole, as I may express it—although, of course, we are hundreds of miles from that point—and now the hour of our redemption comes. Your ship is stanch?"

"Yes."

"It was to be expected. It is a glorious day that has dawned for us. Later you shall explain, if you will, Captain—but I think I did not hear your name."

"Nathaniel Stanford, sir."

"A good name, surely. We never had an American here, though once there were two Englishmen, Perkins and Avery. The former is dead, but five of our party bear the name of Avery. Then we have five of French blood, Jules Boissard and his kindred, and two Germans, Gottlieb Spanschold and his sister, and all the rest of us are Dutch. I am the choice of our colony for leader, and after me comes Wilhelmus Ingenhousz, Hugo Opzoomer, and others. You will be greeted by all with delight—your black hair and your blue eyes will be your sure passport."

"And the ship in the offing," reminded Gretchen, smiling again.

"True, true! Blessed ship. Sir, it will seem odd to you, but I have never seen a ship!"

"But I thought the Flying Dutchman——"

"Our little rowboats, or pikarros, as we call them, are our only crafts. Ruler of my people though I am, and Flying Dutchman by right, I have never had a ship."

He bewildered me afresh, for I remembered the fok'sle tales of the storm-beaten vessel, with its worn sails and tottering masts and spars, and its crew of longbeards that was reputed to have struggled Horn. There had always been a question whether all these tales were idle yarns or founded on fact, but here was a man who claimed to be Vanderdecken, yet he avowed he had never seen a ship. How, then, had he come to this remote land?

I wanted to question him vigorously, but the man had a dignity at once kindly and massive, and I remembered that I was a boy of twenty-one years, and could not find courage to bombard him with interrogations.

After his last words he dropped his eyes tions before we sail with you," he pursued. "We shall need a few days for prepara- and meditated deeply, and then suddenly "I hope that will not matter with you?" aroused.

"Not at all!" I said heartily.

"We will delay you as little as possible."

"Pray do not think of that. Have you sextant or quadrant? They are needed in navigation, since we determine our position by them, or, to use another term, get our bearings."

"I have heard of them, but know nothing about them."

"Do you know the latitude and longitude of your land here?"

"No. I can only tell you that it is a great island, its average breadth twenty miles at this, the inhabited end, but its length many hundreds, and reaching away to vast fields of ice."

"It surprises me, sir. I have seen trees, grass, fruit, grain, flowers—yet the world supposes all this region to be a waste of ice."

"Has not Jeremiah Whitebone explained? If not, then know that we have a warm current of water here. I am told that, farther north, you have what is called the Gulf Stream, a wide mid-ocean river of warm water that flows through the ocean and creates a warm belt. We have such a stream here, but its power has been dwindling for eight years, our crops have been falling off correspondingly, the cold has increased, and unless former conditions return, South Amsterdam is certain to return to the savagery of nature, and be only an icefield with weather always below zero. You can see from that what your coming means to us. But for you, we should ultimately have died of the great cold."

"It will give me great pleasure to help you away, sir. Just now, this matter of a stream of warm water interests me, for I am a sailor. My part of the world does not know of a stream of that sort here."

"Compared with the immensity of the ocean, it is small. Off to the east there is a vast volcano which spouts up lava constantly, and around it is a region fifty miles square that sends up steaming hot water, all being part of a great fire underneath the water. In some manner a stream is created and sent flowing north, but it bends as it runs, taking a course like a crescent, and finally almost returning to its starting point. That is why, I think, your mariners have never discovered it—it does not go far enough north to reach your sailing courses."

"And you get warmth from this hot water stream?"

"Yes. It creates a limited temperate area. This island is squarely within its flow. But for that we should be in eternal ice. Yet, as I have told you, it is dwindling away, the volcano is dying, and our land is doomed to return to intense cold, or so we believe. Formerly, we had cattle, sheep and horses, but all have died. Having no living domestic animals, we subsist upon fish, grain and vegetables, and have for a year. That reminds me, it is time for breakfast. Captain, bear us company and you shall taste of our poor hospitality. All here eat in a common dining-hall."

Gretchen clapped her hands.

"Won't it be a great surprise," she cried, "when we usher in our guest?"

"So it will, daughter. Now make ready."

They went about their preparations, while I gave some thought to the mysteries of the case. Not the least perplexing was the question, if they were once shipwrecked persons, how had they come by these horses and cattle my host had mentioned? And how had they managed to build houses, sow grains and till the soil?

Vanderdecken and his daughter were soon ready, whereupon we left the house, but the surprise we expected to give the people was not to be. Jerry Whitebone had been ahead of us, and we found the men, women and children in the street, eager to see the stranger from the sea.

I became the center of interest, and, though some were timid and diffident, others pressed forward and urged their claims to recognition. Vanderdecken smiled upon them benevolently, and then addressed them publicly.

"Friends," he said, waving his hand, "our day of gladness has come. The Ruler of earth and Heaven has sent the expected deliverer, and we are soon to be released from our exile. Here is the great young captain, his ship lies just beyond yonder rocky hill, and he is ready to take us to his bosom. Friends, let me make you known to Captain Nathaniel Stanford."

For a humble second mate I was highly uplifted when they crowded forward, eager to shake my hand, but I made the most of it and submitted with good grace. Over a score of hands I clasped, hero-like.

"Where," asked Vanderdecken, presently, "are Patroons Ingenhousz and Opzoomer?"

"At the dining-hall, lawgiver," a maiden replied.

"Ah! they have not heard the news."

"They heard, but declined to come."

"Say you so?" and Vanderdecken looked surprised.

"Yea, lawgiver."

"We will meet them there."

There was a touch of the careless in his manner, but I detected half-hidden concern under the surface. He had already mentioned that the two men were next to himself in authority and influence, and it was clear to me that something uncommon lay back of this lack of zeal in the patroons.

I hoped trouble was not afoot in the ranks of the strange people.

After a short delay, we walked on, I going between Vanderdecken and Gretchen. The other persons I took heed to half-unconsciously, and found them all intelligent of appearance, generally prepossessing, and fairly well clad, though the fashion of tailoring was singular and more comfortable than in worldly style.

The dining-hall proved to be a building set apart wholly for that purpose, and having only space for cooking and eating. Entering the main room, we were in a spacious place wherein were three tables, duly set for the coming meal.

There, too, we found Ingenhousz and Opzoomer. Here I tell much in little, for they were to be potent factors in events on the strange land. In age, appearance and character they were much like Vanderdecken, being middle-aged, large of frame, abundantly bewhiskered, grave and impressive, but the warmth of the former greeting was not met with from them. They stood together, and did not move until the lawgiver called to them.

First eyeing them anxiously, he spoke kindly.

"Friends," he said, "you must have heard the news. Pray look upon the mariner with black hair and blue eyes who, according to Vanderdecken the Great, was to carry us out of bondage."

At this they came forward, polite and mild, but unsmiling, and both shook my hand. Neither said he was glad to see me, but there was no rebuff. Then, without much delay, all hands seated themselves. The three great men of the community, Vanderdecken, Ingenhousz and Opzoomer, each took place at the head of a table, and so we eat, my seat being between the lawgiver and his daughter.

It was a good breakfast, fish being its main feature, and the fish was cooked in a way new to me, rendering it extremely palatable.

Both before and after the sitting down there was much talk, and Vanderdecken did not allow himself to grow silent, but I knew his mind had lost its old ease. He often looked at the two patroons, and with a trace of worry. For myself I was perplexed. Why should Ingenhousz and Opzoomer look with scant good will upon the man who was come in a ship to bear them away from the land of exile?

I was soon to learn.

When the eating was over the lawgiver rose and made an address, congratulating his people that they were to be liberated from exile, and also touching upon another point which gave me some light.

"You will remember," he added, "that Vanderdecken the Great, just before his death, prophesied that our people would finally be liberated; that the liberator would come in a ship, and that we should know him because he would have black hair and blue eyes. Friends, all this has come to pass. A ship lies off the bay, and her captain is here. Look upon him and you will see that he has hair and eyes as prophesied. Thus has the words of the Magnificent Mariner been proved true. Take joy to your hearts, friends, for we will go hence early. The deliverer has come."

More he said in the same vein, and then he sat down. Instantly Hugo Opzoomer rose, and the anxious look deepened on Vanderdecken's face.

"Friends," said the patroon deliberately, "it does not need many words from me when another has given you so freely. I wish only to say that, according to our traditions and our archives, he has correctly quoted the words of Vanderdecken the Great, our Prophet and Magnificent Mariner. That august one foretold the coming of a sailor captain with black hair and blue eyes, and our liberation. One thing our present lawgiver forgets, a thing which I, as keeper of the archives, have clearly in mind."

Opzoomer paused, looked about him, and then ponderously added:

"The thing is this: Our Prophet said that if the captain with black hair and blue eyes came by day we were to trust him fully and go with him, but if he came in the night he would be a false, faithless, cruel, dangerous man, to trust whom would be our ruin. My friends, the young man now with us has the hair and eyes mentioned, but he came to us in the night. Shall we trust him? It will be our ruin. I do my duty in stating this. Now you can debate, if you wish."

Deliberately the speaker took his seat, but with his few words he had destroyed the peace and joy of his hearers. Trouble reigned among us, and the future was ominous. More than that, I saw that I was to be the storm center.

CHAPTER IX.

LIFE AT STAKE.

There was a brief lull, unbroken even by a motion in the room. It was impressive, and as I looked along the line of faces and noted the gravity and concern there pictured, I grew additionally uneasy. Intelligent these people were, in their way, but, plainly, they were superstitious. Words that a man of the world would have laughed away were taken seriously to their hearts. A prophecy of old was accepted as words of Holy Writ.

Vanderdecken broke the pause. Rising slowly, he surveyed his associates. Ruler though he was, he did not look the master then.

"I have heard the keeper of the archives," he said, little spirit in his voice. "We all know how wise Mynheer Opzoomer is, and how conversant with the archives. I know far less of them. Realizing my lack of acquaintance, it is far from me to question the accuracy of his report, yet, in a matter so vital, in a matter affecting our women and children, methinks it will be best that we read the great prophecy word by word before we decide this matter. It is like this, brethren."

He held out his left hand.

"Here I hold the archives." This said, he extended his other hand and added: "Here I hold the ship that lies off the bay, manned, provisioned, fitted with sails, commanded by a skilful captain. It is for us to decide which weighs the more. If the archives bid us stay, the ship offers chance for us to leave this land soon doomed to ice and deathly cold. We must choose between the two."

He sat down and Mynheer Ingenhousz half started to his feet, but, catching the eye of Opzoomer, he sank back into his chair. At that moment the keeper of the archives was the dominating spirit, and as he sat passive it was clear he was calmly resolved to have things wait. Looking at him I could not feel he was a villain, for he

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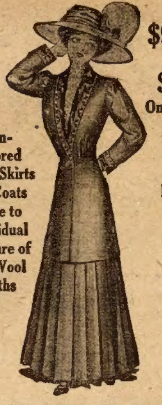

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was of attractive appearance, but his influence was all the more dangerous because he was, in his way, a just and well-meaning man.

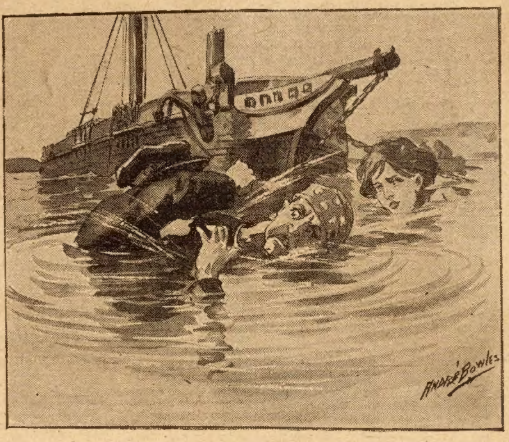
When Vanderdecken perceived that nobody wished to say more, he rose with an assumption of briskness, and his example was generally followed. The tables began to clear. The people slowly filed out, but as they went they looked hard at me, the friendly mood of the past hour replaced by doubt and aversion.

Vanderdecken paused to speak briefly with Ingenhousz and Opzoomer, and then rejoined Gretchen and myself, and we walked forth together.

"For now," said the lawgiver, "we will return to my house, but presently you will want to see our village in full, captain."

"That will please me," I returned, "but there is no haste. My sailors will want to hear from me, so I will soon go to the ship."

"Methinks duty demands that I accompany you, but I have labors to perform. My son, Hendrik, will, however, act as my representative and go with you. Jerry Whitebone is busy with his kindred, so we may excuse him. Hendrick will go."



"Let him go!"

It was kindly said, but I took the notion that Hendrik was to be guardian of the destiny of the people. With a ship off the bay the exiles would be foolish to give me chance to spread my sails and leave them again alone.

I had not yet seen Hendrik, but I promptly agreed to the decision. Despite the unfavorable front of Opzoomer, I had no wish to desert my new acquaintances.

After the house was reached Vanderdecken acted the host with grace and kindness, doing all he could to put me at ease, and I must say he impressed me still more favorably. A little later he busied himself with other affairs, and I was left to his daughter. She had been grave and mainly silent, but she rallied now.

"It will be strange," she said, smiling, "to desert my native land, but I long to be in your ship. It must be grand to sail on, on, on, to go fast and far, and be master of the deep, and of storms and all other troubles."

"Some storms test a ship harshly," I replied.

"But great men like you know what to do."

"In a way, yes."

"You are masters of the ocean. How grand!"

"Unless shipwreck comes."

"I feel that you would never be shipwrecked. You must be full of skill and wisdom to be captain at your age."

I was about to tell her that I was only a humble second mate, but checked the impulse. Among this people it was, perhaps, just as well to get all the glory I could from a title. I might need all such help if Mynheer Opzoomer persisted in his opposition. Yes, I would be a great man if I could.

Gretchen avoided reference to the keeper of the archives, and I did not force the subject. While we talked, Vanderdecken went out, and, five minutes later, his son Hendrik came. The latter was a trifle older than Gretchen, a tall, massive man with blond hair, a fine, kindly face and gracious manners. Gretchen introduced him, and he made himself agreeable at once, having much of his sister's urbanity. If he was impressed by the direful fact that the Cousin Polly dropped her anchor at night, I heard nothing about it.

An hour later, Jerry being still invisible, Hendrik and I walked to the water, entered the boat and pulled to the ship. All was quiet there, and Bijah formally received us as temporary officer in charge. The guns made a brave show as he had arranged them, and I felt that my men were capable of taking care of the ship.

Bijah and Solon were greatly relieved at seeing so young and athletic a man as Hendrik, and when I had whispered that there was no man ashore whose years counted up above one hundred, their superstition mainly vanished. We showed the younger Vanderdecken all over the ship, after which he and I returned to the village.

Gretchen received us alone, and I chanced to overhear her say to her brother that the principal men of the place were in consultation. I realized that they were discussing the unhappy fact that I had let the Polly's anchor go at night, but tried to act as if at ease.

After all, such intelligent men ought not to hesitate as to their course, and I believed the archivist would be overruled in his opposition.

I saw no more of the elder Vanderdecken until near noon, but, in the meanwhile, Hendrik and Gretchen took me all over the village. It was not a strange place. True, its architecture and many other things were unlike Massachusetts towns, but not sufficiently so to cause great wonder.

Dinner was had in the usual place, and Opzoomer and Ingenhousz talked with me in grave kindness, or what seemed like it, and my only worry was that even Vanderdecken did not make an announcement that the opposition based upon the archives had been withdrawn.

During the afternoon the three great men visited the ship under my guidance, and, once there, the web of doubt seemed to be loosened. All took much interest, and the Polly was surveyed from stem to stern. The grave men grew light-hearted, talking of the coming deliverance with gratitude and ready flow of words, and as we rowed back they unitedly fell to discussing how long it would be before they could get away. Mynheer Opzoomer was the most active advocate of haste, and I lost still more of my doubt of him.

It had been arranged that I should pass the night in Vanderdecken's house, so, of course, the evening was also passed there. During the talk on that occasion there was mention of the so-called pirates who had attacked the Polly.

"The case of these men troubles me," said Vanderdecken. "Evil as they are, I dislike to leave them in this land where the growing cold will soon be fatal to all who remain."

"They have seen fit to cast loose from us," reminded Gretchen.

"True, daughter. Still, I feel for them, especially for those long of our people. I remember, too, that they were good men until Tony Mossett came among us."

"Tony Mossett!" I repeated, the name falling upon my hearing with strange familiarity.

"He is their leader, and the one who led them into their bad ways. He has been here but two years, having been a shipwrecked sailor who was borne here on a raft."

"Tony Mossett!" I repeated again. "I've heard that name before, though where I don't recollect—ah! I have it!"

Memory had gone back four years to that time when, in the ship Saucy Jane, I had first heard the legend of the Flying Dutchman as we perched on our chests in the fok'sle. Tony had been one of the crew, and the man who had sneered at mention of Vanderdecken, denying that there had ever been such a man, and denying the Flying Dutchman in full.

It struck me as remarkable that I should come near him after so long a time and in so strange a place. For I knew it was no similarity of name—when fighting the pirates I had seen the familiarity in the face of the leader.

"Tony Mossett," my host went on thoughtfully, "has proved a very troublesome person here. He has defied us and our laws, and bewitched some of our young men. We call them pirates, and so they really are, though they have no ships to attack. Their vandalism has chiefly been on land. This morning's attack on my daughter is their boldest step."

It had been in my mind to ask Vanderdecken how he happened to bear the name of a man who, as the Flying Dutchman, had been the subject of legend before my host was born, and the victim of the reputed long battle with the storms and squalls of Cape Horn, but the lawgiver talked on and gave me no opening, and I was as diffident as usual, so I demanded no such explanation then.

We were about to retire for the night when Vanderdecken bethought himself of something more. He took me outside and pointed to the east.

"See!" he directed.

I looked. Far away, far beyond the land and over the water of the ocean, I saw a bright glow that mounted high in the dark sky. So might a burning city have looked from a distance.

"It is the source whence we get our temperate climate," he added. "The light is from the burning volcano of which I have told you, the central point of that fiery region whose lava flow heats the water of the ocean and so warms our land."

"It must be a vast fire," I returned.

"So it is, but 'tis nothing compared with former years. When our land was at its best, and almost tropical, the volcano was far more active and filled with far greater vehemence. In those days what is now a mere glow from this point was a red, fierce, flashing light that sent forked tongues shooting upward, giving us a magnificent spectacle. As I have told you, the fires are dying out, and so our temperature is growing colder, foretelling the return of this land to ice and desolation. The day will come when no man can live here, because of the cold."

We lingered for some time, then re-entered the house, and after evening devotions, retired for the night.

It was long before I slept, for the strange experiences of the day made my mind a tumult, and all the more because so little had been explained to me, but I finally fell asleep.

Hours passed peacefully, and then I had a rude awakening. Coming back to conscious life with a start, I found rough, unfriendly hands upon me, found my throat so compressed that I was likely to strangle, and harsh voices jarred upon my ears. Then a jerk at my body told that I was being bound, and I realized that I was in desperate danger.

Alarmed, I put forth all my strength and essayed to break the hold upon me, but many hands seemed opposed to me, and my senses reeled under that strangling grip. Assailed, choking and helpless, I contested in darkness with unknown and remorseless foes.

This extraordinary story of shipwreck, love and adventure will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. A lot of strange and exciting things happen. Read it. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you if you send in a year's subscription. It only costs $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

Makes Musicians Smile.

Thaddeus Rich concert master of the Philadelphia orchestra, was discussing things musical a few nights ago with a number of friends when they started telling of funny things that had happened to musicians.

"When I was studying in Boston," said Rich, "they used to tell a tale about a man named Harper, an odd character, who played a trombone in one of the small theaters there. One time they were rehearsing a new overture.

"Throughout the piece Harper was a little behind the rest of the men. Before they started it a second time the leader reproved Harper for not coming in more regularly with the other players.

"When they attempted it again, Harper came in as usual two or three beats behind time. The leader stopped and, after letting loose a lot of profanity, demanded to know if the trombonist knew he was playing about half a dozen notes behind the others.

"Harper nodded. 'That's all right,' said he, 'I can catch up with the others any time I want to.'"

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INVISIBLE FRIENDS.

Do our young readers ever think of how many friends they have whom they never saw? Perhaps you think you can very easily guess who they are! Perhaps you will think a minute and then exclaim:

"Oh, I know whom you mean! You mean the many persons, the grown-up men and women, who think a great deal about us, and write interesting and useful things for us to read! We are sure they are our invisible friends, for we never see them."

Now, what will you think if we say that you have missed it decidedly? That we mean you have first-rate friends, whom you never saw, and that none of us ever saw, whom we cannot see?

Sometimes I wonder what would become of so many little people if they did not have these invisible friends. I have gone a great deal among very small boys and girls, and have seen them so often in dangerous places, and have known so often of their meeting with all sorts of accidents and just escaping whole with their lives and limbs, and that, too, when there were no large people near to guard them, that I often think our dear little folks must have some very good friends about, who are always on the lookout.

And if you want to know what made me think of this just now, I will tell you.

We have a dear little fellow with bright blue eyes, fine light silken hair, and rosy cheeks, who is one of the brightest and drollest little chaps you ever saw. He is not old enough to walk without shoving a chair before him, and his tongue is not yet straight enough to put out any word without a very large crook. He tries to say "dog," and comes very near it, but that is the best he can do.

He cries very little, but smiles, laughs, crows, throws up his hands a great deal, and if anything were to happen to him it would be a dreadful blow to the whole house.

Yesterday his aunt was just rising from her chair to accept his mother's invitation to go out, when she said she felt at once that she ought not to go, that there was some mysterious good she might do by staying at home, although the bright sunshine and balmy air were strong inducements for her to go out of doors.

The afternoon was passing quietly away when aunty, seated in the rear parlor below, heard a very loud cooing at the head of the high, straight stairway.

She sprang to her feet, rushed into the hall, and her heart almost sank within her as she saw the dear little fearless fellow holding by one hand to a banister, and swinging his foot, in very independent style, over the abyss beneath him. She sprang up the stairs and reached him just as his hand gave way and he was ready to plunge forward, headlong down the many steps which lead to the floor below.

No one could tell how we should have felt if we had come home and found our darling lying dead, or with his back broken, or otherwise maimed for life. It seemed as if he never looked half so dear as he did last night as he lay asleep in his little crib.

And how did it happen that he was left to crawl out to so dangerous a spot as the head of the stairs?

Well, the careless young nurse got to playing with the other children, and let Master Andrew crawl to the next room, where he found the door to the hall standing open, and hence the young scamp's curiosity came near leading him to destruction.

And we think his little sister has some very good, invisible friends, too, for only this morning she came to her mother just in time to have her burning clothes put out, for she had passed near the hot fire, and her dress behind was almost ready to burst into flame, when the danger was detected in time, and she was saved from being burned to death.

You will say, perhaps, that this was about enough for twenty-four hours or less, and so it may seem, but it is a great comfort to know that our little folks have a good many invisible friends who keep careful watch over them.

I have no doubt that many of you, as you grow older, will feel something, perhaps quite often, which will tell you that some invisible friends are near, though you may not see them, and cannot hear their voices.

In my late parish in Massachusetts a very wonderful thing happened, I think, through the care of one of these invisible friends.

An affectionate mother had left her babe lying in a cradle which was standing in the sitting room, and she had gone out to the kitchen to attend to her morning work.

All at once she felt that she must hurry in and take her darling child out of the cradle. Then she heard a tremendous noise louder than the roar of thunder.

There were large factories not very far away, and she did not know what to think of that dreadful explosion which shook her house. She had hardly time to harbor this thought, when roof and ceiling over the sitting room came crashing through with a frightful noise, and a piece of a huge iron boiler, weighing four or five hundred pounds, dashed through the cradle and ground it to atoms, and then passed into the cellar through the floor.

Then the mother, trembling all over with fright, hugged her babe closer to her bosom, and knew what it meant, when some invisible friend seemed to tell her to snatch her infant out of the cradle.

I could tell more than one story how some invisible friend has saved my life, and perhaps you would like to hear of one or two. Well, here is one:

"Bob———, as we used to call him, and I were playing on a certain Saturday afternoon—a good while ago, perhaps it was before you were born—and you know how the boys and girls who go to school like the Saturdays, for they are the play-days of the week. And so we went, of course, to about the most dangerous place we could find; and that was at a millpond where the carpenters were putting up a new sawmill. We ran through the woods, along the banks, over and over the dam, until we were a little tired, when we concluded to rest a bit inside the mill.

Workmen were perched far up, hammering away about the roof. One man was using a heavy sledge, driving together the sections of a high waterwheel. Now it chanced that he who is writing these lines stood on a foundation beam immediately below where this man was using the sledge. I had no notion of moving away just then, for I was resting, and looking out over the water, not giving one thought to the workman over my head, nor to the danger of my position.

At that instant I seemed to hear a sharp whisper in my ear, or rather deep down in my mind, which seemed to say, "Step aside! step aside!" Instantly I took one step to the left, and the second after, whiz, went something past my ear, and dashed against and almost split a board under my feet and overlying the beam on which I was standing.

I heard an awful expression of alarm from the workman above, as he looked after the falling sledge as it slipped from the helve in the act of striking, for he expected to see me stretched out dead on the spot, and so it would have been had not the invisible friend whispered so quickly in my ear, for the heavy iron, had I not stepped aside, would have struck me on the head and have crushed through my skull.

I could tell you several other stories to show how these dear invisible friends save our lives; and then you could not wonder that I firmly believe that most people have guardian keepers around and about them, although they never see nor feel them.

And if you ask me how I know that this is true, I will say that I believe it, first, because of such facts as those I have just told you; and secondly, and especially, because One whom all the world ought to believe tells us so.

For He speaks by His Spirit of those invisible beings who are always going on errands of mercy and of love.

But we must not forget, too, that there are evil spirits—invisible enemies—as well as invisible friends; and these will have power to lead us into evil, if we allow ourselves to go into bad company and to learn their ways.

Innocence and Guilt.

In the famous art gallery in Paris known as the Louvre are some of the finest paintings which the world has ever known. In that great gallery there hung, side by side, for a long time two companion pictures, entitled "Innocence" and "Guilt." The first impression which these pictures immediately made was the sense of contrast—how different they were from each other. The one was radiant with the white light of truth and purity; the other was shadowed by the inevitable darkness of foul thoughts and evil deeds. But a closer observation revealed the fact that both pictures had been painted from the same face. And the truth of the painter's teaching was that the fair face of innocence, touched as it is with the sunlight, and being as it is the home of undisturbed thoughts, can, by its disloyalties and insincerity, its falsehood and unreality, be changed into the face of guilt, frowning with anger and suggesting baseness.

Now, that is the precise significance of this lengend of Leonardo da Vinci, the famous Italian artist. It is the transit, the quick passage of the soul from integrity to depravity; from that innate manliness which fills the face with a latent heaven to that degradation of character which writes out its vileness upon every feature.

It is said that Leonardo da Vinci was engaged in making studies for the face of our Lord, and sought everywhere for one whose face should have suggestions of the spiritual beauty of the face of Jesus. At last he fixed upon a fair youth whose name was Pietro Bandinelli. He was a singer in the cathedral choir, was of unblemished reputation, was reverent in his manner, and withal had a face that was full of a rare attraction and beauty. Immediately after this Pietro left Milan and went to Rome, and there evil wove her coils about him; from the purity of his life he passed to dissipation, and bit by bit the beauty was destroyed and the fine glory of his spirit vanished.

The silent years departed, and Leonardo da Vinci's great picture only wanted one face to effect a marked contrast, and that was the face of Judas.

The painter sought again for a model among the men whom he met, and one day, in the city streets, his eyes lighted upon a man, dirty, ragged, unhappy, with latent torture in his face. In a moment he felt that this was his man.

He took him to his studio, searched his face with those keen eyes, penetrated to his very soul, and completed his study for the portrait of Judas.

Presently he was astonished to hear the model say: "You do not seem to remember that you painted me once before," and to find that this was the very man who had sat for him for the picture of the Savior! Seen in this vivid light the contrast is awful. One day a face so fair and rare that it may be a symbol of the Christ; another day a face so base that it may stand for that of the world's supreme traitor—Judas. Yet that is the oft-repeated fact of life's supreme tragedy. By submission to evil the stamp of dignity is broken and nearly obliterated, the heavenly beauty gradually fades, and the child that had all heaven about it in its infancy, and to whom the commerce with angels was the instructive fellowship of the heart, passes into the man who has been driven from all his Edens, from whom the angels have farther and farther receded.

Individuality.

"Mr. Hopkins," says the teacher, "I feel that I should speak to you about your son. He is not succeeding in his studies as he should."

"I'm sorry to hear that. What is wrong?" asks Mr. Hopkins.

"In his arithmetic, for instance, he insists that two and two make six and that the half of twelve is eight. And in geography he always answers that the Pacific ocean lies between America and Europe."

"Now, Miss Rools, you bring up a point I have often made. Our present school system is an absurd arrangement, sticking to the cut-and-dried habits and ideas of centuries. Here my boy is displaying a little native originality, and you want to stifle it in its inception. It seems to me that the purpose of a public school should be to discover and develop and encourage original modes of thought in the pupils."

The Timidity of Women.

"And yet you hear women spoken of as poor, weak, timid little creatures," said Robert E. Gammel, as he jerked his head in the direction of the woman who had attracted his attention. "Timid, eh? O, yeh! They're timid all right. Would any man have the nerve?" And again he jerked his head toward the little woman.

The woman, a well groomed person, wearing one of those hats with big long branches sticking up in front like the feelers on a katydid, was standing in front of a store, preening herself and using the plate glass window for a mirror. Evidently she hadn't got her hair fixed to suit her when she left home. And her hat had been moored too much to one side. First she pulled out a hatpin and jabbed it back in again in a new place. Then she took out her back comb, caught up the loose ends of her collection of hair, filled her mouth with hairpins, then put the hairpins back where she got 'em, gave a deft pat to the coiffure here and there to make a finished job of it, turned around to get a general size up of her figure and continued on her way.

Through it all she had been as oblivious to the passing throng, and unconcerned as if in her own bode-wahr.

"Yeh, they're the timid ones, women are," repeated Gammel. "You wouldn't find a man that would have the nerve to stand up in front of a mirror in a crowd like that long enough to tighten his necktie."

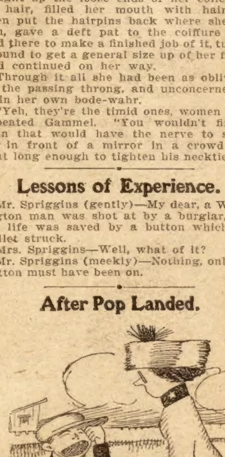
Lessons of Experience.

Mr. Spriggins (gently)—My dear, a Washington man was shot at by a burglar, and his life was saved by a button which the bullet struck.

Mrs. Spriggins—Well, what of it?

Mr. Spriggins (meekly)—Nothing, only the button must have been on.

After Pop Landed.



Lady—What are you crying about, little boy?

Boy—Boohoo! My dad fell downstairs an'——

Lady—Well, did he hurt himself?

Boy—No!

Lady—Then that's nothing to cry about. You ought to laugh at that.

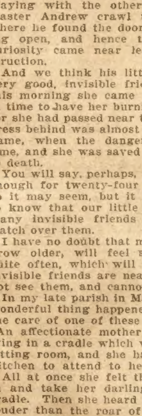
Boy—I did, and that's why I'm crying now.

An Up-to-Date Girl.

A kindergarten class in Brooklyn had finished singing "My Country, 'Tis of Thee," but one small girl had been silent.

"Ellen, why didn't you sing with the rest?" the teacher asked.

"I didn't know it," replied Ellen. "I only know up-to-date songs."



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The Golden Spider;

Or, The Woman in Black

By Major Albion F. Grant

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Begun in No. 7, January 12. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XIX.

FOR A BETTER LIFE.

MARGARET the Woman in Black, was well but not expensively dressed.

For a moment the two women looked searchingly at one another.

"I've been waiting to see you," said Mrs. Poman, as she advanced a step with her gaze still riveted upon Margaret, about whose lips lurked the semblance of a smile.

The man on the couch made an effort as if he were about to leave the room when the voice of the Woman in Black interposed.

"You can remain. There shall be no secrets between Leone and I."

Mrs. Poman made no reply to this and launched at once into the business of her visit.

"You have played me false," she said. "After what I have done for you——"

"Enough!" broke in Margaret. "I have buried the old and hated past. I have put away, as well as I can, all that is black in my life. I have cast that penal land far from me. I from this day shall be a better woman, trying to atone for my wickedness."

"Pish!" exclaimed Mrs. Poman. "You have to thank me for——"

"For what? For my transportation? I thank you for the blots on my name? Let me tell you something, madam. I failed with the cone."

Color fled from the flushed face of the woman of Soho Place and she threw out a jeweled hand.

"I have failed and I thank Heaven for it!" Margaret went on. "The girl still lives. I had murder in my heart when I went to her room with the death cone. I placed it before her and saw her sink back in the thrall of the infamous thing. Did I pity her? Not then because I was to get, as I fondly thought, at least a million. I thought it was to be share and share alike, and when you offered me the paltry two hundred thousand I revolted. There, don't interrupt me. I have played for high stakes for you, madam. I would have killed—killed in cold blood. I carried out the game almost to the end. I saw the Golden Spider and held the dread secret over his head. You sat in your fabulously-furnished parlor, sipped your wine and directed my hand. You were too cowardly to slay. Now from this moment there is no Margaret Mattox. The black chapter of my life's history has been finished, though I would stand on red-hot coals the rest of my days if I could blot it out entirely."

A cold sneer came to madam's lips.

"You are over bold!" she cried. "You face me with such words? I made you. I could have handed you over to more than four years of exile from England. I could have opened my mouth and today you would still be in that torrid zone, suffering all the tortures of the damned. But I was lenient."

"Yes," bitterly answered Margaret, "as merciful as the tigress that seizes the lamb and stands over her with blood-dripping tongue. You, merciful? When did you become so?"

"I could yet speak and see the prison doors open to receive you for just punishment."

"Speak!" exclaimed Margaret, drawing herself to her true height. "Tell the world what you know and I will throw myself upon the mercy of the cruel courts. Madam, you have played your last card with me. Tonight will find me in Hampton Court."

The fingers of Mrs. Poman found the silvered butt of the weapon she had brought to "Botany Bay," and the tiger in her nature drove the last vestige of blood from her face.

The sharp eyes of Margaret Mattox caught the slight movement that indicated where the hand of the woman had gone, and she suddenly covered her with outpointed finger.

"My husband——"

"Where is your husband?" demanded madam.

"Yonder! We were married in the colony," spoke Margaret boldly. "This is one of the little secrets I have kept from you. Before me, let us hope, there is a better life—a brighter future. For you—well, madam—I shudder at the career which lies before you."

"Go on. I can crush you at any time. Think not that my claws are always hid beneath the velvet." She laughed. "You will discover some day that they haven't forgotten their old way of rending."

"Do you hear that?" and Margaret turned to the man. "That is the threat of the world's most desperate woman. Listen to me, madam. I advise you to consort in your deep-laid plans with Tony Joncourt, or, as he has been called, Tony Watch-the-Corner. What if Gunner had known that his manager once stood in the dock for grave robbing and other crimes? What if he should discover that this man stole from the body of a dead woman jewels which her husband had buried with her lest the world should discover his life's secret."

"Has the man confessed?"

"I know it all. I know the life history of this person who has been elevated to the highest position in the greatest establishment in London. I have not been idle since I came back on a ticket-of-leave, to play a game for millions for you. I know what Tony has done. I know that he dismissed the young girl at your command. I know that he kept in hiding the stolen jewels in order that he might blackmail the old man in Hampton Court. Now, madam, shall I go back and slay the young girl? What shall the reward be?"

Margaret ended with a laugh that went to the depths of Mrs. Poman's soul.

"You don't answer," pursued the Woman in Black. "Or shall I seek Sam Barlow, the Golden Spider, and force from him another million—for you?"

The hand that clutched the revolver fairly twitched at the hidden trigger.

Madam Poman even noted the position of Margaret's acknowledged husband, and her glance shot toward the door.

"We are two from this moment," said Margaret.

She reached back and flicked the door open. Madam Poman did not stir.

"Go back to your ill-gotten gains!" she said. "Not for the world would I touch of the blood-money a single pound. You may tell all you know of me. You may summon to your parlor yet this night the police of wicked London. I care not. I will fight the world alone from this night. I am no longer the Woman in Black," and she glanced at her less somber garb. "I am still Convict 9988. But, for all this, I am a woman. Perdition may yawn for me. But never again shall these hands do the bidding of a living creature but him!" and she pointed toward the man who, in silence, had drank in her every word.

Slowly the hand of Mrs. Poman relinquished its grip on the secreted revolver.

With a look capable of killing, had it been more than a look, the woman of Soho Place moved toward the door.

"The future has no sunlight for you!" she hissed at the portal with her face turned full upon the silent woman. "It shall be as dark as your past."

A contemptuous smile was all the answer she received, and with a haughty toss of her head, madam gathered up her silken skirts and disappeared.

Margaret and the man heard her footsteps on the stair and both listened in silence till the last sound had died away.

As for Mrs. Poman, she bolted from the house and ran toward the carriage.

She gave a short direction to the man on the box, and the vehicle rattled off.

Ten minutes later she sprang from the carriage and ran up a short flight of steps.

Turning the brass knob of a door on the first landing she dashed into a dimly-lighted room.

"Who's there?" said a voice from a dark corner where an old-fashioned bedstead stood. Madam darted across the carpet and found a man with his head swathed in bandages and his arm in a sling.

"Tony!" she exclaimed.

"Madam!" was the response. "I've been robbed!"

Leone's hand swooped down upon the recumbent figure and settled talon-like upon the man's shoulder.

"Robbed? My God! and by whom?"

"By old Gammer, the watchdog of the Golden Spider. He nearly beat the life out of me."

"And completed his act of villainy by robbing you? You were the most powerful—"

"But when a madman attacks you with a chair, what defense can you make?" grimly replied Mr. Joncourt. "They're gone. Ah, if you had only taken possession of them, madam."

Mrs. Poman did not reply. Her look became a stony gaze, then her lips parted.

"Margaret has betrayed us," said she. "The wench of the penal colony has gone back on us."

"On you, madam?"

"On both of us!" hissed the creature of Soho Place. "I've had her at my mercy within the hour."

"At your mercy?" laughed Tony. "Pardon me, I never thought you had any mercy."

"It was for the first time. I am going home now."

"I've sent my resignation to Gunner's. I'm going away. I got some of the Golden Spider's cash—ten good thousand of it—and I'll put a thousand leagues of salt water between me and London."

"If the beagles don't prevent," chuckled madam, and with this she flitted from the apartment and left Tony Watch-the-Corner alone.

"Good luck, death and perdition to you," called out the man on the bed as he fell back clutching the covers in his futile rage.

CHAPTER XX.

"MY CHILD! MY CHILD!"

It was the second night after the events last described that Cecil entered the house in Hampton Court.

He had been summoned to the house of mystery and he proceeded thither with his mind full of doubt and wonder. When he opened the door of the library he espied Sam Barlow seated in his favorite chair at the table. The Golden Spider looked up at the young man's entrance and fixed his gaze upon him. There was a strange, deathly pallor on the old man's face, and as Cecil went forward he was waved to a chair opposite.

"The time has come!" said old Sam in a weak and trembling voice. "I am going to confide in you. It is not a long story and, even if it were, I would cut it short. My strength is going. I shall not be the Golden Spider, as men call me, much longer. I shall soon be a lump of clay, hustled to a little plat of ground where the grass will grow over me and my very name be forgotten."

Cecil would have spoken as the old man paused, but a thin hand bade him keep silence.

"Some years ago, I need not say how many, I left the realms of bachelorhood and took unto myself a wife. The world knew it not, for I kept the secret. My matrimonial venture was, in some respects, an unfortunate one. I believe I was not fitted to be the husband of a woman who was capable of making a man happy. I was in the grasp of the gold fiend. I saw nothing but the shining stuff which is the cause of more unhappiness in this world than any other one thing. My wife was an estimable woman and in course of time she presented me with a daughter who should have won me from the pursuit of riches. I made her life

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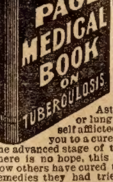

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unhappy, Heaven forgive me. As I went on piling up wealth, making millions that should have satisfied me, we grew apart. One night the climax came. My wife, taking the babe, left me alone. I had never brought her to this house. She had never crossed the threshold of the Golden Spider's web. I dared not seek for her, for that would have disclosed the secret I was hugging, miser-like, to my heart. I believe that Gammer discovered evidences of my marriage by my little absences, but, slave-like, he did not speak.

"I virtually drove that woman to her death. One day she was found dead on the street and the truth of her identity came to me in a singular manner not necessary to relate here. If I thought that my great secret was safe from the world I was mistaken. Others knew it. The woman known as Mrs. Poman of Soho Place, had discovered it. She shared it with another woman, Margaret Mattox, who was sent to the penal colony for a crime against me. I have recently discovered a man named Tony Joncourt, late of Gunner's," and here the old man smiled as he pronounced the word "late." "These two were in league, for both held the secret I had tried to keep from the world.

"When I found out that my wife was dead, I had her buried, but first I placed on her person some jewels, which in my happier days I had bestowed upon her. These jewels were carried by her inanimate form to the tomb and I fancied that my secret was buried with her. Then I instituted a search for my child in the most mysterious manner possible, for I dared not trust the police. The search was unavailing, and later on I abandoned it. Still in the depths of my heart I cherished the little one to whom I had given life. I had gone to riches over the broken heart of a woman and sent out into the world my own flesh and blood. I plunged deeper and deeper into the accumulation of money, hoping in that pursuit to forget the past and my own—shall I say criminality?

"The net which the conspirators drew around me, tightened as the years went by. I have been blackmailed without the power of resisting the miscreants. When Margaret Mattox came back and entered this house I did not recognize her. I did not know that she knew the secret nor that she was leagued with Leone. They at one time robbed me of two millions. I was, for a while, a prisoner in Leone's house, but escaped by the payment of more. This cabal was insatiable. It had the maw of a lion. And yet I dared not resist. When Tony Joncourt came thither and 'borrowed' ten thousand, leaving with me a ring, which I had placed on my dead wife's hand, I knew that he had the other trinkets. I sent Gammer after them, telling him to get them even if he were compelled to take the leech's life. Well, be brought back the jewels and I learned that Joncourt had served time as a grave robber. The whole thing was clear. He had robbed my wife's grave!

"But Gammer came back with his death-wound and you have seen him with lips and eyes closed forever. As I have said, you see me on the verge of the unseen world. When you were last here you spoke of the young woman whom you rescued from the death cone in the hands of the Woman in Black, or, as I know her now, Margaret Mattox. Where is this young woman?"

"In her lodgings in Apple Way," said Cecil.

"Would you bring her to this house?"

"Do you really wish to see her?" asked Cecil with a look of astonishment in his eyes.

"I would command it if I had the authority," was the reply. "You described her to me and that is why I would see her before the end comes. It may be an old man's folly, but my heart, somehow or other, goes out to your friend."

Cecil rose and lifted his hat.

"She shall come at once," said he. "You shall see Sybil within an hour."

"Hasten!" said the Golden Spider. "I have the best of reasons for requesting this favor."

Old Barlow fell back in his chair and closed his eyes. If he heard Cecil depart, he made no sign and while the young man was threading the labyrinthine mazes of London's streets, he moved not, but appeared like one whose life had gently gone out without a sign.

When Cecil returned to Hampton Court accompanied by Sybil, whose face betrayed her amazement, he paused in the hallway of the Golden Spider's mansion. There were voices in the library. The couple paused underneath the hanging light and listened.

"Come in," came a voice from beyond the door.

Cecil turned the knob and entered with Sybil Gray, and both paused on the threshold.

A little cry from the girl's lips and her hand closed on her lover's arm.

"'Tis she!" she whispered to Cecil. "'Tis the woman of the smoking cone!"

"Ah!" exclaimed Sam Barlow. "You have brought her!" and with this his hand feebly waved the pair forward.

His dark eyes became fastened upon Sybil. He leaned forward and scarcely seemed to breathe.

"At last!" suddenly broke over his thin lips. "Her mother's face! her mother's face! My child!"

A pair of eager arms were outstretched toward Sybil, who recoiled and looked at Cecil.

"It must be true," said Cecil. "Go to him, dear."

With a quick step the girl went forward and sank into the arms of the old man in the chair.

"My own—at last! I care not for the dark secret now," parted Barlow's lips as he drew the trembling girl close to his fluttering heart. "They cannot rob me of this, the best treasure on this wicked earth!" and his lips imprinted a kiss on the pale forehead of the ex-clerk of Gunner's.

Margaret Mattox rose and bestowed a last look upon this strange tableau and turned to the astonished Cecil.

"The Woman in Black will do penance for her sins a thousand years if necessary. Look to him. He is near the other world," and pointing to the Golden Spider, she vanished from the room.

That same night a life went out in busy London. The career of the Golden Spider came to a close and he passed away with the hand of the long-lost clasped in his.

And almost at the same moment in another part of the great metropolis the police entered a house in Soho Place to open the door of a sumptuously-furnished room to find a woman dressed in silks reclining in a gilded arm-chair.

A smile of triumph appeared on her face and one of her hands almost touched a goblet in which still glittered the lees of one of the deadliest poisons in the world.

Never again would she play for high stakes, and never more would the fashionable world flock to her brilliant functions, toadying to her false position and ill-gotten wealth.

If a search had been made for Tony Joncourt it would have extended beyond the seas, for already, with the shadow of a nemesis behind him, he was putting leagues between him and his crimes.

Margaret Mattox, the Woman in Black, also disappeared, going far from London where she could live down the past and make atonement for her sins.

All that the Golden Spider possessed fell into the hands of Sybil Gray, who soon became Cecil's bride, and as the years passed lightly, bringing to them smiling faces and chubby hands to make life pleasant, they forgot, in part, the many strange scenes through which we have taken the reader.

Men forgot Madam Poman, Gunner's got a new manager, and all London came to admire the beautiful woman who, as Sybil Taine, gave much of the Golden Spider's wealth to charity, for she had much to give; and the house in Hampton Court lost forever its secret and its mystery.

The end.

FRATERNAL PRESCRIPTION FOR NERVOUS WRECKS.

(From "Medical Reports.")

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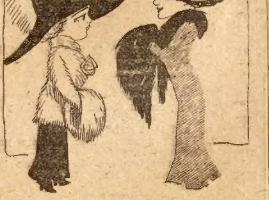
The nervous man seems always tired and worn out. Retiring brings no relief. Sleep brings no refreshment, all because of an abnormal condition of the nervous system brought about by—well, no matter what—the desire is for relief and freedom with rich, red blood surging through the body supplying the sensitive nerves with all the power of sensation, so that sleep is refreshing, food is delicious, work is play, play is pleasure.

Obtain three ounces of syrup sarsaparilla compound in a six ounce bottle. To this, add one ounce of compound fluid balmwort and let stand two hours. Then add one ounce of tincture cadomene compound (not cardamon), and one ounce of compound essence cardiol. Mix, shake well and take a teaspoonful after each meal and one when retiring until a vigorus, bounding new-health takes hold of the tired, exhausted nerves.

Her Fear.



Ethel—Tom loves you dearly.

Edith—I'm sure he does.

Ethel—Why don't you marry him?

Edith—Because I want him to keep on loving me.

The Cosmogony of Moses.

BY MAX ADELER.

Mr. Keyser stopped in at my house after coming from church last Sunday night; and after some remarks about the weather, he says:

"Did Moses deal in mahogany?"

"Did Mo—I don't exactly understand you."

"I say, was Moses in the mahogany business, making furniture, or anything?"

"Do you refer to the prophet Moses?"

"Yes; what had he to do with mahogany?"

"Why, really, I do not know, Mr. Keyser. I never heard that he had anything to do with it. It is a most extraordinary question."

"I know it is; and that's what puzzles me. The minister in his sermon tonight said that every true Christian would have to accept the mahogany of Moses; and I can't imagine what on earth he meant."

"Maybe you misunderstood him."

"Well, I reckon I can hear about as well as most people, and I know that he said mahogany."

"It is very strange."

"Yes, that's what I thought. I don't want any mahogany, but if I did I'd just as lief get it of Moses as of anybody; only I don't know how that's going to help a man to be pious."

"I tell you what I guess he must have said; that every true Christian would have to accept the cosmogony of Moses. Wasn't that it?"

"Oh, well, I don't care a cent how you pronounce it. It amounts to the same thing in the long run. I've always heard it said so's to sound like 'mahogany,' and it's the same old word either way, and you've got to get it of Moses."

"Let me explain, Mr. Keyser. 'Cosmogony' means the account of the creation of the world, and what Mr. Potts meant was that we must accept Moses' theory of the creation."

"Oh! that was it, was it? I'm glad you mentioned it, for I couldn't see why yaller pine or maple wasn't as good for Christians as mahogany."

Then Mr. Keyser hunted up his umbrella, brushed his hat with his elbow, and went home.

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FREE COUPON.

This certificate and 10 cents to help defray distribution expenses entitles the holder to one 50-cent package of Sargol tablets, the home treatment which makes thin folks plump and attractive.

The Sargol Co., 100 R Herald Building
Binghamton, N. Y.

EVERYTHING TO FURNISH THE HOME ON SMALL MONTHLY PAYMENTS

Just a small remittance each month—whatever you can conveniently spare—and the beautiful homefurnishings that you select are easily paid for. Goods are promptly shipped and you may take from 10 to 30 months in which to settle for them. It's the most liberal and most convenient credit service given by any homefurnishing concern on the American continent. We charge absolutely nothing for this credit—no interest—no extras of any kind.

CATALOG No. 62 FREE

Our Big New Catalog tells all about this most worthy plan of monthly payments. Write for the catalog and learn how easy we'll make it for you—no matter what your income may be—to have everything you want for your home. This great catalog is beautifully illustrated, a considerable portion of it being reproduced in colors. It quotes factory prices on Furniture, Rugs, Carpets, Stoves, Pianos, Go-Carts, Refrigerators, Silverware, Sewing Machines, Crockery, Clocks, etc., etc.

SOLID OAK KITCHEN CABINET No. 11 12.75

Large and roomy, has cupboards, drawers, bins and sliding boards as shown; stands 70 inches high and is 38 inches wide; extra well made. Number 11. *[Terms $2 cash, $1 monthly]*

HARTMAN FURNITURE & CARPET CO.
Dept. F4 223 to 229 Wabash Ave., Chicago, U. S. A.

Largest, oldest and best known homefurnishing concern in America—established 1855—55 years of success—22 great stores throughout the United States—capital and surplus larger than that of any other similar concern in America.

Friends You perhaps know that many manufacturers give away thousands of dollars' worth of samples every year to advertise their goods. I am the first and only man to give away a full size $16.00 perfect-fitting suit purely for advertising purposes. If you're not sure about your size, send for my free tape measure and book of instructions—

LET ME GIVE YOU A "Canada" Brand $16.00 3-Piece Suit FREE

I am F. O. Lindquist, Pres. of the Canada Mills Co., and make you

This Free Offer

One free suit in each town and city where we have no branch house (one in each ward in large cities) and one on each R. F. D. route.

I WANT TO GIVE YOU one of my "Canada" Brand $16.00 3-piece suits FREE and don't want you to pay one cent for it. Read my great offer—it may sound too good to be true—but it is true just the same. Read my offer.

I Offer You one of my celebrated "Canada" Brand $16.00 3-piece suits free and ask not one cent for it—moreover, I do not ask you to work for it—nor be an agent—nor distribute bills—nor sign any papers—nothing of the kind—for when I say free I mean free. Free doesn't mean work or money or anything at all, it means free without money, without work, without asking a single thing of you, and I mean what I say, and the business world knows my word is good as gold.

Now Listen You may not believe my offer because you do not know me personally and do not know that my word is good as gold. You may have seen free ads before—you may have answered them and found out that in each case you had to do something to get the free article—or you had to sell something in order to get the free thing, and you may think that this offer is just like all the rest—it is not. Please don't think that I'm trying to fool you—no, I don't do business that way—Don't think there is a "string to this offer"—there is no string to this offer—I said free and I mean what I say now and always. No matter how many times you have been fooled before—

You Won't Get Fooled Here for I give you my great $16.00 "Canada" Brand perfect-fitting suit just as I say I will—there is no canvassing to do—no work to do—nothing to sell—It may sound too good to be true but it is true just the same—I have my own wonderful plan—I just want to get this suit on your back without it costing you one cent, then I'll take my chances on building up a trade in your neighborhood—I just ask one favor of those who get the free suits—When you have worn the suit at least one week will you write me a letter and answer these three questions: (1) Does the suit fit perfectly? (2) Is it worth $16.00? (3) May I use your letter as a testimonial—that's all there is to it. You don't have to write me at all unless you want to—but I know you will out of gratitude—you don't even have to promise to write me—send for the free tape measure and blank. Now, I want to ask one favor of you, because I want to get my Canada Brand Advertising Suit advertised in your locality, and before you purchase a suit of clothes this season I want you to make the purchase from me and become my customer, and I will do just exactly as I say—I will give you one of my Canada Brand $16.00 suit of clothes without asking one penny for it.

WRITE FOR YOUR FREE SUIT NOW, DO IT RIGHT AWAY—let me prove to you that I really do give away this splendid "Canada" Brand suit free. It will only cost you the price of a postal to be convinced and to find out that I am a man of my word, and do as I say—address me personally like this—

President F. O. LINDQUIST, Canada Mills Co., 576 Wool Street, GREENVILLE, MICH.

CLOSE FITTING COLLAR
OUR NEW CONCAVE SHOULDER
PADDING
PERFECT SHAPE
DOUBLE STRENGTH
CANVAS POCKET STAY
POCKET
STAY TAPE

Government Corn.

Farmer's Boy—Pop, the corn husks in this field are very thick.

Old Farmer—That means we're going to have a hard winter.

Boy—But the corn husks in that other field are very thin.

Farmer—H'm! I got that seed from th' Agricultural Bureau at Washington, an' I shouldn't wonder if it was darn fool enough to go by the Government Weather Bureau.

AGENTS WANTED

AGENTS—$33.30 A WEEK

Why not make it? Jack Wood did it! He writes—"Hurry up 100 more—sold first lot in 2 days—best seller I ever saw." Hundreds of agents coining money—$5.60 worth of tools for the price of one. Wonderful invention—drop forged from finest steel. Nickel Plated all over. Astonishing low price to agents—1,200 ordered by one man. Get our grand confidential proposition quick. Sample free—don't delay—experience not needed—write at once. THOMAS MFG. CO., 2117 Wayne St., DAYTON, OHIO

AGENTS, CREDIT, Perfumes, Flavors, etc. Big profits. Express Paid. Terms Free. HERBENE AGENCY Co., Box 282, Sta'n L, New York

AGENTS WANTED to sell pocket knives with name and photo on handle; write for terms. Morris Cutlery Co., Morris, Ill., P.O.Box A

$5 a Day Easily Made Selling GLASSES. Agents wanted. Send for catalog. Coulter Optical Co. Chicago

WE PAY $36 A WEEK AND EXPENSES to men with rigs to introduce poultry compound. Year's contract. IMPERIAL MFG. CO., Dept. 67, Parsons, Kansas

AGENTS: 100% PROFIT. Monkey-Wrench Plumbers' Plyers, with 13 other tools combined. Most wonderful combination of tools ever made. Lightning seller. Sample free for examination. Forshee Co., B.1209, Dayton, O.

NEW FOUR-SIEVE STRAINER and "No-Splash." Samples free to agents; send 2c stamp, cost of mailing; $5 profits daily; let us prove it. SEED'S, 165 Duane Street, New York

MEN WANTED QUICKLY By big Chicago mail order house to distribute catalogues, advertise, $21 weekly, liberal expense allowance. MANAGER, 1216 State Street, Chicago.

AIR-GAS Burners in Stoves. Stop use of coal or wood. Cheap fuel. Agents coin money. Address AIR-GAS CO., Dept. A, Columbus, Ohio, or Sioux City, Iowa

$1500.00 A YEAR FOR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES Last year 577 Agents made over $1500.00 each selling our wonderful everlasting COOKING UTENSILS. An excellent proposition for high-class agents. Write tonight. American Aluminum Mfg. Co., Dept. 1, Lemont, Ill.

BIG MONEY selling our new Gold Letters for office windows, store fronts and glass signs. Easily applied. Sample and particulars free. Address Metallic Sign Letter Co., 416 N.Clark, Chicago, Ill.

Earn $200 MONTHLY selling the Dr. Haux famous Perfect Vision Spectacles—finest and cheapest on earth. Write for agents and dealers terms. DR. HAUX SPECTACLE CO., Box 115. Haux Building, St. Louis, Mo.

Sell Tobacco and Cigars

Locally or traveling. Salary or commission. Experience unnecessary—we give full instructions. Address MOROTOCK TOBACCO WORKS, Box K11 DANVILLE VIRGINIA

BIG PROFITS to AGENTS

New Household Novelties; 200 Proven winners. Agents wanted (men or women) for part or whole time. Goods sell themselves—one sale means many more. Write quick for our *Big Free Special Introductory Offer.* Household Supply & Mfg. Co., 202 Milwaukee St., Davenport, Iowa

Fish Bite like hungry wolves, any time, if you use MAGIC FISH LURE. Best fish bait ever discovered. Write to-day and get a box to help introduce it. Agents wanted. J. F. Gregory, Dept. 45 St. Louis, Mo

PORTRAIT AGENTS WANTED.

Guaranteed Crayons size 16x20 40c. Frames at your own price. 30 days' credit, samples free. We are not in the picture and frame trust. We own a large frame factory and sell at one-half the price portrait companies can. Our business established 25 years. We can give you steady employment. Our big wholesale art catalog with confidential prices and instructions mailed free to agents. WILLIAMS PICTURE & FRAME CO., 2506 Taylor St., CHICAGO

MEN WANTED in every locality in the United States to make $20 per week and $3 per day expenses advertising our goods, posting up show cards in all conspicuous places and generally representing us. Steady work to right men. No experience required. Write for particulars.

Royal Remedy Co., London, Ont., Canada.

Fine Pocket Knife FREE

To Agents. Send No Money. Your name and address put in handle—no extra charge.

SALESMEN make quick, big profits selling our scientifically tempered

PHOTO POCKET KNIVES

Be your own boss. Write at once for good money-making proposition and exclusive territory. (3)

CANTON CUTLERY CO., Dept. 31, CANTON, OHIO

AGENTS—My Sanitary Coffee and Tea Makers produce a pure, sweet cup. Needs no settler nor strainer and never wears out. Saves tea and coffee, money and health. Every wife buys at sight. New inventions. Send 15c for 50c size of either, postpaid, or will send sample of both for 25c. Without question the two best selling articles ever invented. Order both.

COFFEE MAKER   TEA MAKER

Dr. Lyons, 1457 Day St., Pekin, Ill.

MAKE MONEY EASY.

Agents wanted in every county to sell the popular Novelty Knives, with name, address, photo, lodge emblem, etc., on handle. Send stamp for catalog. AGENTS EARN $75 to $300 A MONTH. (We show you how.) Big profits—quick sales—exclusive territory. Write quick for our liberal money making special offer to agents. Our new self-sharpening scissors are the quickest sellers for lady agents. NOVELTY CUTLERY CO., 23 BAR STREET., CANTON, O.

Free Lamp To Agents

Men and women everywhere making up to $20 a day—no experience needed—recommending—selling greatest invention of age—the Wonder Oil Lamp. Burns common coal oil (kerosene) but 6 times brighter than electricity—cheapest—most brilliant—most satisfactory in the world. White incandescent light. 80,000 families now using. Free Lamp to Agents. Get lamp for your own home and make big profits. Write quick. Simply send name and address

UNITED FACTORIES CO.

Largest Lamp House in U. S.

1064 Factory Bldg. Kansas City, Mo.

Independent of the Choir.

"I hear that your church has installed a phonograph stuffed with sacred music."

"Yes. Had to do it. Choir had struck."

"New scheme work all right?"

"It's beautiful. Never quarrels with itself, has no skirts to rustle, doesn't fret about the angle of its hat, refrains from giggling or powdering its nose, and, if it gets out of order, a mechanic can repair it."

The Only Bright Man.

"The way to run this country," said the egotist, "is to put thoroughly wise, capable alert, and honest men in control of all affairs."

"Yes," answered Miss Cayenne, "but what are we going to do? There's only one of you."

Thought He Used an Airship.

Mr. Ryetop—Yes, Zeke is coming up. He says he is painting sunsets during his spare time.

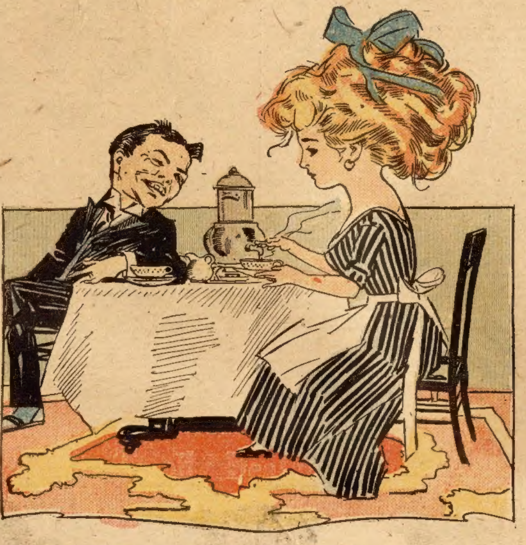
Mrs. Ryetop—Painting sunsets? Lands sake, how does he ever get up that high to to paint them?

Rumor Confirmed.

"They tell me," said the innocent maid, "that your marriage was the result of love at first sight. Is it true?"

"It is," answered the round-shouldered man, sadly. "Had I been gifted with second sight I'd still be in the bachelor class!"

TALKING OMITTED.



Mrs. Benham—Woman can do anything that man can.
Benham—How about discovering the north pole?
Mrs. Benham—Why couldn't she do it?
Benham—It is so cold there that the explorers have to keep their mouths closed for long periods.

Squelching a Singer.

It was at a summer hotel, and the baby, being warm and fretful, cried. "Tut! Tut! We can't disturb our neighbors this way," the fond father said, taking the child in his arms. "Let me sing to him, if he won't go to sleep."

He sang, and straightway came a knock at the door, and these words:

"There's a sick lady next door, and if it's all the same to you, would you mind letting the baby cry instead of singing to it?"

Papa's Plan Prevents Proposal.

He (impecunious)—But you say yourself that your father is anxious to get you off his hands."

She—Yes; that's why I don't think he'll listen to you."

A Tipsy Crowd.

"I suppose you all drank a toast to your host?"

"No, we cut that out."

"Why, I am sure it was on the programme, the last toast."

"That was the trouble. It was the last toast, and so we cut it out."

"But why?"

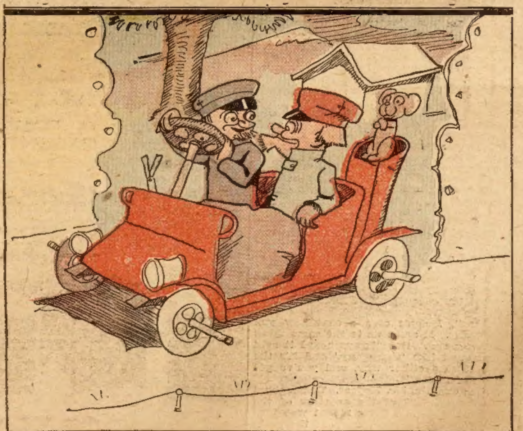
"Well, you see, it was to have been drunk standing."

Sure Sign.

Mrs. Stubb—I have been trying to teach that Chinese laundryman how to conduct business like an enlightened American.

Mr. Stubb—You must have succeeded, Maria. When I went down for my laundry he gave me a lead nickel in my change.

THE VAUDEVILLAINS.



Hans—Vot vas your bruddah Fritz doing these days, Louey?
Louey—Fritz? Vy, Fritz has a job making eyes all day long.
Hans—Making eyes all day? Vos he a flirting, yed?
Louey—Nein. He vas vorking in a hook and eye factory.

nter
ersuit

BUILT A MONUMENT

The Best Sort in the World.

"A monument built by and from Postum," is the way an Ill. man describes himself. He says:

"For years I was a coffee drinker until at last I became a terrible sufferer from dyspepsia, constipation, headaches and indigestion, and was a physical wreck.

"The different kinds of medicines I tried did not cure me, but finally some one told me to leave off coffee and take up Postum. I was fortunate in having the Postum made strictly according to directions on the pkg., so that from the start I liked it. It has a rich flavour and I made the change from coffee to Postum without any trouble.

"Gradually my condition changed. The old troubles disappeared and I began to get well again. My appetite became good and I could digest food. Now I have been restored to strength and health. Can sleep sound all night and awake with a fresh and rested body. Everyone who meets me comments on my getting so plump and rosy.

"I am really a monument build by Postum, for I was a physical wreck, distressed in body and mind, and am now a strong, healthy man. I know exactly what made the change, it was leaving off coffee and using Postum."

Read the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs. "There's a Reason."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

A Modern Polygamist.

She—That's Mr. Osborn over there. He married a million.

He—You don't say. Well, that beats Solomon to a frazzle.

FRECKLES.

It is Easy to Remove Them.

For years I tried every known remedy without success. Skin specialists and doctors said I would take them to the grave. I fooled them all.

I cured myself by a simple discovery. I will send you the prescription free if you will write for it. It took off my freckles and the freckles of thousands of others. It will remove yours. It will clear the worst complexion. Write today. Address Mrs. E. O. White, Box 44, Dept. 1A, Buffalo, N. Y.

Familiar.

Miss Baller—Have you heard my new song? It goes like this—"La, la la, la, oh, bum, bum, bum,"

Manager—I recognize the last line.

A Chance to Make Money.

Yes, elegant free homesteads can still be had in Mexico where many Americans are now locating. You need not go to Mexico, but are required to have five acres of fruit trees planted within five years. For information address the Jantha Plantation Co., Block 593 Pittsburg, Pa. They will plant and care for your trees on shares, so you should make a thousand dollars a year. It is never hot, never cold. The health conditions are perfect.

That's What He Is.

Little Willie—Say, pa, what is a skeptic?

Pa—A skeptic, my son, is a man who doubts the accuracy of his own watch.

BIG COMPANY DISTRIBUTES BIG MEDICAL BOOK FREE.

The well known Pierce Co. of Buffalo, is advertising its business by giving away free of charge copies of the "People's Common Sense Medical Adviser." This famous book has 1,008 pages with engravings and color plates and the copies of the new revised edition that are given away are bound in cloth. This book treats of Anatomy, Hygiene, Medicine, Mother and Babe and every family ought to grasp this opportunity to get a copy free by writing to Dr. R. V. Pierce at the address given in the advertisement on page 14 of this paper.

Our idea of a stingy woman is one who declines to waste thread sewing buttons on her husband's clothes.

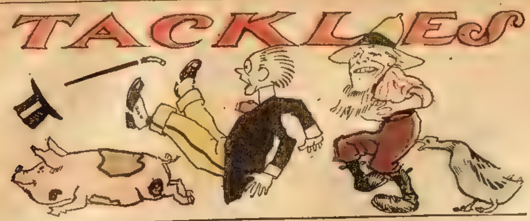
J. P.

Those suffering from weakness and lack of vigor should take JUVEN PILLS. One box will tell a story of marvelous results. This medicine has more rejuvenating, vitalizing force than has ever before been offered. Sent postpaid only on receipt of this advertisement and $1. Made by its originators, C. I. HOOD CO., proprietors Hood's Sarsaparilla, LOWELL, MASS. (z)

A man never realizes how many faults he has until he has been married two or three years.

LADIES, PRESERVE YOUR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemi wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most del ate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful ow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preservin it in this condition until extreme old age. This prep tion has been used for years and hundreds are no using it and are more than delighted with the result Send us ten (10) cents for formula which you can hav filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do no delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.



A Use for Waste Places.

Business Man—I don't see why you farmers are forever complaining. What is the matter with the place where you live?

Mr. Hayseed—Waal, in th' fust place, the land ain't no good—nothin' but stone—can't hardly get grass to grow.

Business Man—Then let the land go and use the lumber.

Mr. Hayseed—No lumber there. Trees all cut down years ago.

Business Man—How about fruit?

Mr. Hayseed—No fruit, either; all killed by grubs.

Business Man—You might turn the streams into a pond and raise carp for the market.

Mr. Hayseed—Can't make a pond. Got no stream. Can't hardly get well water even.

Business Man—How is the well water?

Mr. Hayseed—Bad as kin be.

Business Man—H'm! No soil, no fruit, no trees, no streams, no water but bad water. Well, my friend, the only way out that I can see is for you to quit farming and turn the place into a summer resort.

No Deception.

"No," said the old gentleman sternly, "I will not do it. Never have I sold anything by false representations, and I will not begin now."

For a moment he was silent, and the clerk who stood before him could see that the better nature of his employer was fighting strongly for the right.

"No," the old man cried again, "I will not do it! It is an inferior grade of shoe, and I will never pass it off for anything better. Mark it 'A shoe fit for a queen,' and put it in the window. A queen does not have to do much walking."

All Right, but the Name.

It is an army tradition that the soldier shall grumble at the commissariat, but this particular complainant seems to have had a fair case.

"Any complaints, corporal?" said the colonel, making one morning a personal inspection.

"Yes, sir. Taste that, sir," said the corporal promptly.

The colonel put the liquid to his lips.

"Why," he said, "that's the best soup I ever tasted."

"Yes, sir," said the corporal; "but the cook calls it coffee."

A Bad Precedent.

Mrs. Motherhood—Why is it I have such a time finding a nurse girl for my children?

Employment Agency—Well, you see, mum, some time ago a lady had a baby die, and she thought so much of that baby that after it was dead she kept the baby's nurse right along at the old wages, with nothing to do but walk in the park, pretending she's got the baby with her. Since then I can't get a nurse girl to go into a family where the baby looks healthy.

A Rich Old Fraud.

Old Bullion—What's the matter now?

Young Wife (pouting)—You have not kept your word. You said, before marriage, you'd do anything in the world to please me.

"Yes."

"You said you would gladly die for me."

"Y-e-s."

"Well, but you don't."

A Poor School.

Mrs. Strongmind—I am afraid that women's college I am sending my daughter to doesn't amount to much.

Friend—It is a very famous institution.

Mrs. Strongmind—So I have heard; but my daughter has been there three years and she doesn't look or talk or act like a man yet.

Two Admirers.

"He is nearly crazy because his son wants to marry an actress."

"Is he so prejudiced against actresses?"

"Quite the contrary."

"Then what is his trouble?"

"He wants to marry her himself."

Why He Remains a Bachelor.

"He boasts that he has been able to remain a bachelor, though exposed to all temptations."

"He ought to keep still about it. That only shows that nobody wants him—and look at the guys that can get married!"

Same Old Hoodoo.

Thirteen fair maids sat down to dinner regardless of the ancient superstition.

But the ancient superstition aforesaid got its work in just the same.

Before another year had rolled around seven of the bunch were married.

AN EASY ONE.

Said Jack to lisping Jill: "You can't
Find any rhyme for 'month.'"
Said Jill to Jack: "That ith eathy—
I'll find a rhyme at onth."

The Modern Brand.

Smith—Brown is a great philosopher.

Jones—Indeed!

Smith—Yes. He's too philosophical to bother about philosophy.

The Dawn of Love.

"We are told, Tommy," said the Sunday school teacher, "that we should love our neighbor. Now, who is your neighbor, Tommy?"

But Tommy Tucker merely blushed, hung his head and said nothing. He didn't want to tell the little girl's name.

Impartial Justice.

Foreign Visitor (proudly)—In my country we have one law for prince and pauper.

American Host—Same way here. It doesn't matter whether a man is a beggar or a millionaire, he's got to obey the law, unless he's got a pull.

Didn't Object.

Irate father—I'm getting tired of paying your bills, young man. Your extravagance must be checked at once, sir. Do you understand?

Wayward Son—Yes, father. Make the check for $500, please.

A Catchy Price.

Askitt—Say, what occasions the rush of women to that drug store over there?

Noitt—Oh, the druggist advertised a bargain sale of 2-cent stamps today. He is closing them out at the rate of six for 13 cents.

Gritty's Reason.

Kind Lady—And you are going to Nicaragua and become a soldier of fortune? Why not go in search of the north pole?

Gritty George—Because, mum, I think I could thrive better on a diet of bananas den I could on a diet of snowballs.

THE LAMB'S FINISH.

Mary had a little lamb,
But it she could not keep,
For ere a year had passed away
It was a great big sheep.

Then a naughty butcher came,
Wise in the art of sham,
And next day on his counter
The sheep again was lamb.

A Man of Knowledge.

Average Woman—How am I to know which is poison ivy and which isn't?

Average Man—By looking at it, of course. How else would you know? One has three leaves and the other has five. Every man of sense knows that, and I don't see why women shouldn't.

"Yes, I know, my dear; but which kind is the poison kind?"

"Why, you goosey, the three-leaf, of course, or the five-leaf, I forget which."

Suspicious.

Hiremann—You seem to handle the auto pretty well, but before I engage you as my chauffeur I must see a recommendation from your former employer.

Chauffeur Applicant—I'm sorry, sir, but I can't get no recommendation till the end of next week.

Hireman—Why will it take that long?

Chauffeur Applicant—My old boss, sir, won't be out of the hospital till then.

Real Absorbing.

"Have you any absorbing papers around here?" asked the stranger at the news stand.

"Absorbing papers?" echoed the clerk. "Yes, sir. Jimmy, give this gentleman a couple of blotters."

Street Smells.

Citizen—Phew! The odors of Broadway are enough to knock any one over. Why don't you have it cleaned?

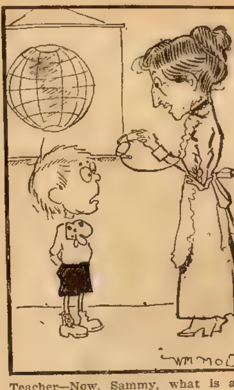
Official—The street is all right, sir. What you smell is the winter wraps that have been packed away all summer in moth paper.

High Lineage.

"This milk looks mighty blue," remarked the young man who had just put up $10 in advance for a week's board in the country.

"Yew bet it air," replied the rural host. "Thet comes from havin' nawthin' but pedygreed cows, by grass!"

Ouch!



Teacher—Now, Sammy, what is a man who draws from life called?

Sammy—Er—a dentist.

Saved a Cool Thousand.

Wife (proudly)—I saved you $1,000 today.

Husband—Saved $1,000? We haven't that much to save. We haven't $100 we can call our own. Hang me, if we have over $10, come to think.

Wife—But you have always said that if you ever had money enough you would build a house.

Husband—Of course.

Wife—Well, for $5 I bought a book showing how to build a $10,000 house for $9,000.

A Lucid Explanation.

"Yes, sah," remarked the Kentucky colonel, "little drops of watah and little grains of sand are naturally associated with each othah, sah."

"How is that, colonel?" we asked.

"It takes the sand, sah, to enable a man to drink the watah," explained the Kentuckian.

GIVEN TO YOU With Your Purchases of Household-Supplies
Through Larkin Factory-to-Family Dealing

MANTEL CLOCK No. 35
Seth Thomas 8-day movement.
Given with $10.00 worth of Larkin Products.

51-PIECE PRINCESS DINNER-SET No. 1405
Finest Semi-Porcelain Ware; Green Floral Border.
Given with $10.00 worth of Larkin Products.

ROCKER No. 905
Choice of Quarter-sawed Oak, Golden-Oak finish, or Birch, Mahogany finish; choice of Red or Green Velour.
Given with $10.00 worth of Larkin Products.

LAMP No. 95
Body and shade buff, blending into green; hand-painted red roses.
Given with $10.00 worth of Larkin Products.

YOU can get all kinds of handsome, desirable furnishings for your home, in this way, without a cent of extra expense. They represent what you actually save on your purchases by dealing direct with us, the manufacturers.

The offers illustrated here are but examples of more than 1600 others that you can choose from: *Furniture, Carpets, Rugs, Silverware, Dishes, Stoves, Women's and Children's Wearing-Apparel, etc.* Our big Catalog, sent free on request, illustrates and describes them all.

Everything We Offer Is Of Highest Quality

By household-supplies we mean your *Tea, Coffee, Spices, Extracts, Baking Powders, Soda, Chocolate, Cocoa, Laundry and Toilet Soaps, Soap Powder, Scouring Powder, Starch, Perfumes, Toilet and Pharmacal Preparations, Polishes, etc.* Our list of Products includes over 325 such necessities; things that you use right along and have to buy somewhere.

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Here is the explanation: when you buy at a retail store, the prices you pay include the expenses, losses and profits of at least three—the wholesaler, sales-agent and retailer—in addition to those of the manufacturer.

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Entered as second class matter June 25, 1885, at the post-office at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879.

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GENTLE JABS.

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Ever notice how few people are related to their friends?

Don't be an eavesdropper. Brace up and butt in like a man.

The man who dislikes you nearly always likes those you dislike.

An undertaker by any other name would lay us out just the same.

Anyway, a girl looks better in an automobile than she did on a bicycle.

There are two sides to every question—your side and the wrong side.

A girl likes an honest young man—if he isn't too honest to steal a kiss.

How many people do you know who can repeat the ten commandments?

Many a man who knows himself is for that reason suspicious of others.

The meanest of all men is the one who makes capital out of a calamity.

The despondent lover may lose heart, but the successful one loses his also.

The woman who tells everything she hears generally adds a little bit more.

Anyway, it isn't a matter of record that an old hen originated the shell game.

Let your mind work overtime, if it will, but give your tongue frequent vacations.

Mind your own business and some day you will be minding a business of your own.

What kind of wings do you expect for the pennies you drop into the contribution plate?

But women can put it all over men when it comes to looking interested when they are not.

There never was a woman who wouldn't make some man sit up and take notice if she so desired.

There is much low grafting that cannot be stopped until the man higher up is behind the bars.

Once in a very great while we meet a girl who knows how to handle a man as well as a young widow does.

It takes a born diplomat to convince a homely woman that she is too sensible to care for skin-deep beauty.

If Senator Aldrich would make himself solid with the masses let him invent a dollar with eight quarters in it.

It might be well to remember that other people have just as much right to their opinions as you have to yours.

Why is it that an otherwise sensible man is seized with a desire to say little things when he is with a pretty woman?

After listening to a pessimist for half an hour a man is apt to feel the way he does after taking a dose of bitter medicine.

The Stolen Maidens;

Or, The Fate of White Slaves

By Elizabeth Butler

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Begun in No. 7, February 12. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XI.

THE valley of the Hoang-Ho River is not the most pleasant place on earth, especially in early August. Kelly swore at the myriads of flies which continually surrounded him and was reproved by his companion. Then he kicked savagely at a stone, and felt a vague delight at seeing it bounce along the ground. He was essentially a man of action and the forced inactivity of his present position galled him.

The priest watched him for a while from under half closed eyelids. Then he spoke, and Kelly resumed the seat he had vacated a short time before.

"Kelly," said the Chinaman, "you have never asked me, and I have never told you, the reason I am so much interested in this affair. Well, I can see you are getting so restless that I'll have to amuse you some way, so I'll just tell you the story of my life if you care to hear it. You are the only one I ever felt inclined to tell it to. My mother was a white slave, so you see, I am only half Chinese. She died when I was only twelve years old, but her influence followed me all through my youth, and explains why I am a priest in the Holy Catholic Church. My father, who was a priest of Confucius, therefore sworn to celibacy, bought my mother, together with two more white women, in this very town in order to offer them as sacrifices in the temple where he was and still is High Priest. Do not look incredulous, my friend, this is done very often, though it is not generally known. It happened to be a great festal week, and my father hoped to gain much repute for piety among the people. Well, to make a long story short, two of the women were sacrificed before the altar, and their blood poured down the idol's throat, but my father had fallen victim to my mother's charms, and secretly hid her in the temple.

"In vain she begged on her knees to be sacrificed, but she was refused the boon of death. She lived to bear two children, one of whom died in infancy, the other was myself. I grew up in the temple, securely hidden from the outside world. I often hid in dark corners and watched the priests at their mummeries. I was a child of ready understanding and soon came to realize the deception and cruelty of their priestcraft. My mother, who prayed daily that death might take both herself and me, taught me many things. I spoke her own language and she taught me to read and write. She instructed me in her own religion and told me much about America, for she had come from that country. She instilled a hatred of idolatry into my childish head, and as I seldom saw my father, I was moulded entirely by her. Her death was a sad blow to me, and when my father told me I was to be admitted to the priesthood as soon as I was old enough, and that my studies were to begin the next day I revolted inwardly, but said nothing in opposition.

"In six months' time I was so far advanced in my studies as to be left alone for some hours every day to meditate and one day I ran away, leaving a note saying I would drown myself in the nearby river. I reached the house of a missionary after some weeks of travel, and I was taken care of and finally sent to America. I know every crook and turn of the old temple where those girls are, and I'll go there tonight. It is the only way to save them, and it may fail, but if I don't bring the girls back, I won't come back at all. So you know now why I would not let you speak today. I slipped a note to one of the girls, which I saw her read and tear up, so I will be expected. I'll have to go alone, Kelly, and you will simply have to curb your impatience and wait for me.

"If I don't come back by daylight you may give me up, and you must take the other two girls and get down the river as quickly as possible. The country is up against the whites as badly as I ever knew it to be, and you had better go by night, as much as possible, and on foot. I expect to be here to pilot you, but I may not, and now I must sleep for a while. Have everything all ready to start at any moment after twelve tonight."

He held out his hand and Kelly grasped it warmly. He could not speak and only wrung the other's hand by way of parting.

CHAPTER XII.

The temple of Tio-Lun spreads itself over a large area. Many winding passages and secret stairways are under the old roof, which has stood for hundreds of years. The great throne room, where for generations the people of all classes have gathered to worship the great god which stood in one end of the immense space was lit with feebly burning tapers. The air was heavy with incense, and the chant of the priests rose and fell on the ears of the assembled people.

As Father Paul entered and slipped into a seat the old familiar words came to him as in a dream, but he went through all the forms of worship, and when he slipped behind a pillar and was swallowed up in the gloom, no one noticed his sudden departure, all being absorbed in the words of the priests before the great altar. Father Paul slipped down a gloomy corridor and through a high arched doorway. He stopped in a dark corner and took his bearings, then made off quietly down a stairway which led into the vault under the temple.

Once or twice he stepped into the shadows to let a priest pass and then noiselessly moved on. Finally he reached a row of cells and examined each carefully through the openings in the doors, but for a long time his search was unrewarded. He had made the rounds of the subterranean cells and was on the point of mounting the stairway once more, in order to begin his search on the upper floors of the building when once more he was forced to glide behind a sheltering pillar as two priests, one of whom he recognized as his father passed him.

They had just come from the prisoners, he judged, for they carried food and spoke of them as they passed. He slipped up the stairway again and stole past the throne room, where the voices still rose in their unearthly sing song, and the incense was growing denser each moment. He mounted to the second floor, where he had to exercise a great deal more care, for priests passed and repassed in almost endless procession, and he slipped from one cell to another with a fast beating heart, for well he knew that capture would mean a death so terrible that he quivered to think of it.

Finally his search was rewarded, for in the last room on the side of the corrider he was examining he found those whom he sought.

They were crouched in a corner of a dirty cell lighted by a foul smelling lamp, and appeared more dead than alive. Two of them were sobbing bitterly and the others sat with bowed heads. Father Paul made a pellet of a note which he took from his pocket, and threw it straight into the face of the girl to whom he had given the note earlier in the day. She grasped it eagerly, and the color came into her cheeks as she read it and put it into her mouth as footsteps were heard farther down the hall.

Paul, watching from his concealment, saw her lean eagerly forward and speak to her companions. The note had merely said, "Make no noise, be ready," but it was enough to raise their hopes.

The hour that passed was a long one but gradually the noises grew less. Several priests stopped and glanced in at the girls, but, with the exception of one who took away the lamp which lighted their cells, no one molested them. Finally Paul thought it safe to venture forth. He slipped the bolt of the door and stepped among them. He spoke in a low, intense whisper and the girls eagerly obeyed him. "Let each one remove her shoes," he said quietly. "Make no noise, for our lives depend on absolute quiet. Let no one speak on any account and then follow me, copying my every movement."

He led the way out into the lonely corridor. It was long past twelve and the great place was entirely deserted. They moved silently down the stairway in "Indian file" hardly daring to breathe and at last came in sight of the outer door. Here Paul stopped and motioned for them to remain where they were. He knew that a watchman guarded that door, day and night and had made up his mind that he would have to use violence. Slipping up behind the doorkeeper he sprang upon him and in an instant they were rolling on the floor, Paul never relaxing his grip on the man's throat. Finally he felt the other's struggles grow fainter, and then cease altogether.

He tied a gag in his mouth, bound him to the door, and quickly led the terrified girls out into the filthy Chinese street. Paul well knew that pursuit would be hot and quick so he lost no time in rejoining Kelly. Then the whole party started immediately to make their way to the nearest mission station, some hundred miles down the river.

The sun rose and found them not far advanced on their journey. The girls were so worn out with the awful ordeal through which they had passed that they were unable, from sheer weakness, to move swiftly, much as their great fear of capture impelled them to. Paul and Kelly frequently exchanged glances and the former more than once shook his head, despairingly.

People began to appear, and of course eyed the strange crowd curiously, and even in an unfriendly manner. They had reached the town of Fong-wo, a small huddle of huts on the edge of the river they had been following, and they were wondering if they might find some shelter, when they became aware that some of the passers-by were pressing up to them in no friendly manner.

They hurried on, looking neither to the right or left, when suddenly a stone was thrown which struck Kelly full on the cheek and laid open a dreadful gash. At the same time several missiles fell among them, and Kelly, blind with pain and rage, faced about, revolver in hand. The party had been forced to come to a halt, and Paul had led them to the side of a hut, which stood nearby.

Stones and sticks fell on all sides of them, but the wall shielded their backs. Momentarily the threatening crowd grew, and angry mutterings were heard on all sides. The girls had been placed against the wall, and Kelly and Paul, revolvers in hand, were at bay, fully determined to sell their lives dearly. One of the girls had asked for a revolver and it had been given to her. She was pale but determined looking and merely remarked that she would save her shots for herself and her companions in case it

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became evident that they would be recaptured.

The rain of missiles increased and not one of the party had escaped injury. Kelly finally spoke: "I'm going to let them have it," he said. "They are going to do us up and I might as well have a hand in the show."

As he spoke he fired into the crowd, and a big Chinaman with an especially evil face dropped the huge stone he had been preparing to hurl, and sank down with a howl of pain. Two more shots followed in quick succession and the crowd fell back and hesitated. Kelly emptied his revolver and pressed it into Paul's hand.

"Give me yours, and fill mine up again," he said, perhaps we can scare them off."

Paul shook his head. "No," he said, "they mean to have us, and they will."

Even then they began to press up again, and Kelly's shots had no more effect. He spoke to the terrified girls.

"You had better shoot yourselves than fall into those devil's hands," he said, for we can't last three minutes.

Paul had joined in the shooting and their shots rang out once more. Suddenly a ringing cheer was heard and some twenty or more young blue jackets rushed around a corner and made for the crowd, which melted away quickly when help arrived. At the same moment Kelly went down, hit on the temple with a stone. When he recovered consciousness he was informed that the party was a relief expedition sent to the assistance of a party of missionaries some miles up the river. They had them on board and were passing down the river when they heard the shots. They soon had the whole party on board and made the best of their way down the river to the port, where in time the whole party embarked for home.

Kelly took leave of Father Paul with a great deal of regret, for he had formed a sincere attachment for him. He tried to pursuade him to return to America with him, but he would not.

"No," said Father Paul, with a melancholy shake of his head, "I am neither white nor Chinese. There is no place on earth into which I exactly fit, but my work lies here, and here I must stay." And from this decision Kelly could not move him. The girls whom he had been instrumental in rescuing wept as they said good bye to him, and left him with repeated assurances of their everlasting gratitude.

After a pleasant voyage they reached their native village in time to attend the trial of the persons who took the life of Horace Brown, some [illegible] before.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Plainville courtroom was packed when the case of the people against Mrs. Brown and Frank Savane was called to [illegible]

Mrs. Brown [illegible] remembered nothing from the time she learned that her husband was dead until she had waked up one morning to find herself a prisoner. Of her flight from Plainville or the following month, she could remember nothing.

Frank Savane had steadily refused to make any statement, but had sat sullenly in his cell, day by day growing more restless as if he saw the shadow of the gallows drawing nearer and nearer.

The first witness to be called was Dr. [illegible], who testified that he had been called to the Brown home [illegible] on the day of the seventeenth of June. He had found Mrs. Brown apparently unconscious, in which state she had remained for some time. Then she had seemingly regained her power of movement and speech, but had no control over her mind. He had faithfully applied tests to Mrs. Brown, and was positive that she had been feigning.

When asked what first gave him the impression that Mrs. Brown had been feigning, he replied that the condition of Mr. Brown's body indicated that death had taken place several hours before the murder was discovered, most probably shortly after twelve o'clock. He argued that it was absurd to imagine Mrs. Brown lying in an unconscious state for seven hours merely from the effects of fright, and he had examined her carefully for signs of blows or wounds but had found none.

He stated that the cause of Mr. Brown's death was the fact that his throat had been cut, the other stabs and cuts on the body having been made some time after death

The next witness called was the mother of Frank Savane.

She testified that she had for years conducted a sort of clearing house through which numerous young girls had been sent for immoral purposes. Mrs. Brown had been an inmate of her house for nearly a year. Then she had met with an accident while getting off a street car and Mr Brown, a fellow passenger, had assisted her to his mother's home, which was near. She was compelled to remain for a week or two while a sprained ankle healed, and Mr. Brown, thinking her an innocent, friendless young girl, had married her at the end of her stay. His mother's death occurring shortly thereafter, he had gone to Plainville to live, thinking it a nice quiet spot for his young bride to help him raise the fine family he looked forward to with such fond pride.

Mrs. Brown still kept up relations with her old associates, and would select a promising young girl, become friendly with her, learn of her plans for several days ahead, and then Frank Savane would appear on the scene when wanted, would step behind the girl, unseen, clap a gag in her mouth and she would disappear into a waiting vehicle, where liberal doses of chloroform would keep her quiet until her captor had her safe from pursuit.

But she testified that from a very small child her son, while, as she said no angel, and easily led, had been a coward, and she was certain he could never have committed a murder.

After several minor witnesses had been called, given testimony and stepped down, Mrs. Brown was called to the stand, where she looked very girlish and young, and people felt their hearts melt toward the girl who seemed so friendless. She merely repeated her former statements and stepped down, leaving a decidedly favorable impression on the minds of the twelve men who sat in the juror's box. Then Frank Savane was called and came slowly to the witness box. His first words, spoken low and distinctly, made his audience sit up with a gasp, while Mrs. Brown sank back in her chair with a terrible drawn look coming over her face.

"I have decided to confess," he said; "to tell everything about that horrible night and throw myself on the mercy of the court. I did not kill Mr. Brown, though I confess I tried to and failed. There," he pointed to Mrs. Brown, "is the person who killed him."

Then he told of how he had concealed himself in Mrs. Brown's room, and she had called Mr. Brown in as he was passing "to give him his good-night kiss," as she playfully said.

She had pushed him down in an easy chair and, standing behind him, drew his head back and kissed him on the lips.

"This was the signal agreed on," said Savane. "As she raised her head I was to strike him on the temple with a loaded cane and it would all be over. Well, I struck him," he shuddered at the remembrance, "and he cried out, 'My God, some one is trying to kill me,' for the cane had struck the edge of the chair, and the blow didn't kill him, only partly stunned him. I was about crazy and struck him again, but only hit his shoulders. I said 'Oh, Mable, I can't do it!' and he turned to her as quick as could be and cried, 'Are you in with this fellow?' Then he covered his eyes with his hands and dropped into a chair. 'Kill me, if you want to!' he said: 'I don't care now.'

"Then Mable put her arm around his neck and quick as a flash she had a razor across his throat, and he just kept his eyes on her till he couldn't see any longer. Then I fainted dead away, and while I was unconscious Mable turned things over pretty well and broke half a dozen little things by throwing them on the floor. Then she sat down and waited for a while until I came to, so I could help her to plan what to do next. I couldn't move for about two hours, I was so sick, but finally I felt that I'd just have to get away from it, there on the floor. But Mable said she had thought it all out, and she took a long, slender knife she had, and stabbed him in the back eight or nine times, so it would seem that more of a struggle had taken place. Then she changed her night gown, because the one she had on was all bloody, and washed her hands. My hat had fallen in a pool of blood, and she took that and my cuffs and her nightgown and burned them in the kitchen stove. She poured kerosene on them and they burned in no time.

"Then we went down stairs and talked over our plans. There is a little cellar under the summer house, and we decided to use that for a hiding place for me for a day or two, as no one knew of the cellar and it wasn't easy to find. Mr. Brown used it to keep his best wines in, and hardly ever opened it, so no one knew about it.

"Well, we planned to wait till the excitement blew over and then collect the old man's money—he had more than anyone supposed—and run over to Italy for a year. Mable had often told me that she simply couldn't live in Plainville another month, and Brown made her sick, he was so easy. She couldn't stand it any longer, so that was why we decided to put him out of the way.

"Well, along toward morning I went to the cellar, taking food and water enough for two or three days, and a cot and lamp and some books and other things to make me comfortable. Along about the time the servant was expected Mable went out on the porch and laid down.

"Everything seemed to be going along all right when word came that a detective was onto us, and we decided that Mable had better disappear, like so many others had done, so we went up to Chicago and were just beginning to feel safe when along comes this Allen, and here we are. Now, I swear I've told the truth, and I hope I'll get credit for it. That is all I've got to say," said the prisoner as he sat down amid a dead silence. Every eye was turned on Mrs. Brown, who sat in her chair as if she were turned to ice. Her eyes were fastened on the faces in the jury box, and it seemed as if she read her doom there, for she gazed and gazed as if in the spell of some terrible sight.

CHAPTER XIV.

After the attorney's had finished their arguments the Judge summed up the case and the jury filed out. They returned almost immediately, and as they filed into the jury box the Judge arose, and addressing the foreman of the jury, asked the customary questions and received the expected answer of "guilty." Then the Judge pronounced sentence that Mable Brown and Frank Savane be taken to the jail and there confined till the twentieth day of September, when they were to be taken to a scaffold erected in the jail yard, and there hanged by the neck until they were dead.

At the word "dead" a woman arose, and shrieking and screaming, was half led, half carried from the room. It was Madame Blanche, whose sins had found her out, for the rest of her days were passed in an insane asylum.

Mrs Brown and Frank Savane were led back to jail, and after repeated postponements of their sentences were at last sentenced to life imprisonment instead of death, by a lenient Governor

Frank Savane died of quick consumption in less than six month's from the date of the sentence, and to his dying hour swore to the truth of his story as told on the witness stand.

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Mr. and Mrs. Pickaway, although really fond of each other, had frequent quarrels, owing, no doubt, to infirmities of temper on the part of both. Mr. Pickaway was telling his troubles to his elderly maiden aunt.

"I try to be as good a husband to Bertha as I know how to be," he said, "but we don't seem to get along. It takes so little to irritate her, and when she starts to scolding she never knows when to stop. She takes offence, too, at such little things."

"Then don't say those little things, Joshua," said his aunt. "When she is cross you must try to be conciliatory."

"I am conciliatory, Aunt [illegible]," he answered. "I often say to her, 'Bertha, I know the utter uselessness of trying to reason with you, but will you listen to me just a minute?' and she gets mad even at that!"

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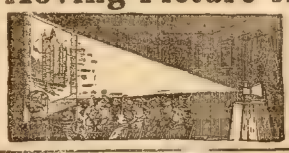

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Boys' and Girls' Corner

The Storm Child:

Or, Hunting the Kidnapers

By J. M. Merrill

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CHAPTER XVIII.

ANOTHER ABDUCTION.

A SWEET and thrilling song, across the heads of the audience from the lips of a slip of a girl whose beauty was undeniable. There could be no doubt of her power since the mass of people sat enthralled. Gordon himself was almost smothered with his admiration, astonishment and chagrin.

It was Nada, all right—his Nada, yellow-haired, blue-eyed and sweet with the dew of young maidenhood on her brow. And yet there was something lacking to the heart of the boy. She was Nada, and yet not the same. Her contact with the world had frayed her somewhat, and he was ready to cry in his sorrow for the change. Nada was no longer a child. She was a woman, with the applause of people spoiling her fresh young soul. It was wicked to thus thrust her into the limelight in her very childhood.

All of this passed like lightning through the brain of our Gordon during the short three minutes he sat and listened, as in a semi-dream, to that song. The boy shut his teeth hard to repress his feelings

The encore fetched Nada thrice before the footlights.

The performance was nearing its conclusion when Gordon entered the theater, so that he had not long to wait its ending. It was well that this was so, since he had hard work to repress himself till the curtain fell on the last act.

Despite his anxiety, Gordon Greaves did not wish to create a scene. He was, however, determined to meet Nada and learn the truth.

He glided to the side entrance to the stage the moment the curtain went down. He crossed the threshold, up a few steps, brushing aside a curtain, and ran plump upon a girl in gala attire—Nada, sweeter and prettier than when she stood on the stage receiving the plaudits of the multitude.

"Nada. Oh, Nada!" exclaimed the boy.

He flung both arms about her neck and kissed her.

She struggled faintly, half-crying.

"I have come for you, sister," Gordon cried. "They want you at home——"

"Stand back, you little fool!"

A hoarse voice was injected into the confab, while a strong hand seized the boy and hurled him violently aside. It was the same old tactics, for which Gordon refused to stand. He collected himself and, with bent head, made a dive into the stomach of the man who had jerked him aside.

The gallant DeKane was doubled up like a knife, and fell breathless to the floor.

"Now come with me, Nada," and Gordon linked his arm in that of his new-found sister and led her to the stage exit. By this time considerable confusion prevailed among the attaches of the opera company.

Two of them blocked the escape of our boy hero.

"You can't go out till we know what this means," said one, a burly hanger-on of the place.

At this moment the speaker was thrust aside and a hand grasped the arm of Gordon, drawing him and his companion across the threshold and down the stairs

"This way, quick!" cried a voice. "Here's a side entrance. A hack waits and there's no time to lose."

Gordon had his wits about him. The voice was that of his friend, Gus Ellis, who, it seemed, had been watching Gordon's movements ever since he entered the theater.

Once in the hack our friends had nothing to fear.

Ellis gave a number on Spruce street and the vehicle rolled away. All this happened with very little flow of words. Gus Ellis had proved the man of the hour. Gordon was extremely grateful for his assistance.

Scarcely a word passed between the occupants of the hack. In the course of a few minutes the vehicle halted and Ellis sprang out, assisting Nada to the walk.

"I don't know what this is all about," uttered the girl in a faltering voice. "Surely it wasn't necessary to use such violence——"

"Don't worry, Miss Greaves," said Ellis. "Gordon is dying to explain, only give him a chance. I know you are surprised, but that is only natural."

When the speaker would lead the way into the house, the girl hung back. Gordon stood at her side, urging her gently forward with his hand.

"No, sir, I'll not stir a step till there is an explanation," said the girl, becoming suddenly determined. Gordon was surprised at her want of appreciation of her rescue.

"Why, Nada," he said in sorrowful tones, "they are all mourning for you at home. You know how queerly you left us. I thought you were drowned at first. Father and mother are feeling very bad. I have spent months hunting for you. And now——"

"And now you have found me, you take me by force from my best friends," said Nada coldly.

Gordon's heart sank. This reception of his good offices threw cold water on his hopes, and proved that the eccentric Luke Fowler had been truthful from the outset.

"I can't see how you make that out, Nada," said the boy at length. "You were stolen by force, weren't you?"

"Yes, but Papa DeKane thought that the easiest way out of the trouble. He knew your people would not let him have me if he made a demand."

"Come in, youngsters, out of the cold," put in Ellis at this time. "You can talk this over by a warm fire, and will be less likely to get into a fume. What say?"

The hack was gone and Nada decided to grant her late brother the favor of an interview. Once seated in a cozy little parlor by themselves, Ellis closed the door, with the promise that they should not be interrupted.

And thus it was that Gordon Greaves found himself face to face with his stolen sister once more.

There was a slight coldness between them at first. The position of each was exceedingly awkward. Where the boy had expected to find joyful acceptance of a rescue from the hands of vile abductors, he met with cool, almost severe rebuff

"I have hunted for you many months, Nada," said the boy at length, a hungry look in his eyes as he devoured the girl with his glances

"Have you——"

"Yes, and I have spent a lot of money besides."

"I am so sorry that you did this for me, Gordon," she cried, melting suddenly. "I do not wish to seem ungrateful, but I have found my own father, and it seems right that I should stay with him."

"He must be a nice sort of father to leave you till you grow up before claiming his child," declared Gordon severely.

"He explained all that. I was all broken up at first."

"Did you want to come home at first Nada?"

"Yes, indeed. I cried for a whole week."

"And all this time your kind, new father was telling you about duty!"

"Yes, about that, and about my mother."

"Ah, your mother?"

"Yes. She died when I was a wee baby, that's why papa could not keep me with him, although he would have done so had not the nurse ran away with me. So, you see, I was really stolen when a baby, and my own papa grieved long years before he found me."

"Very likely!"

"Don't you believe me?"

"Of course I believe you, Nada," with a softening flash of the eye, "but this scheming rascal who abducted you—never. What are you called now?"

"My full name is Isabel Fontaine DeKane."

"Fine as silk. Whew! but that scamp knew how to reach a girl's heart," exclaimed Gordon, at the same time examining with his eyes the rich gown worn by Nada.

"Papa has been very good to me."

"So it seems; and you have been coining money for him right along. A generous old skunk and no mistake!"

"Gordon Greaves, you shan't talk so wickedly about my papa!" cried the girl, rising in anger. "I'll not stop another minute to be misused."

"All right," returned Gordon, springing to his feet and placing himself against the door. "You can go in just a few minutes. I have spent almost a year searching for my stolen sister, and I have a right to know some things; to know why the old home-folks are forgotten; to ask why, even though you'd found a better home, you did not write; also, when prosperity came to you, why you did not remember the good Michigan mother who had brought you up from babyhood, watched over you nights a-plenty when you were sick nigh unto death; and the good father, rough and uneducated though he was, who mortgaged his farm to pay the doctor when you was ill four months and we all thought you would die. It seems strange that a girl as well brought up as you should jump into a new home and forget the ones who have some claim to your affection."

"Oh, Gordon!"

The girl turned and sprang, weeping, to the arms of her foster-brother.

The crust was broken, and Nada, human little child of the woods, was herself once more. A new light had dawned in her soul and she was her old unselfish self once more.

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Even as boy and girl stood thus a harsh step came rasping up the walk.

CHAPTER XIX.

AN UNEXPECTED REUNION.

The doorbell rang sharply.

Gordon turned as his companion stepped from his embrace.

"It is papa!" she exclaimed, her face going pale.

"He shall not have you," said the boy in a low, determined voice. "You belong to those who fetched you up from babyhood—you stand to that, don't you, Nada?"

There was an anxious appeal in voice and eye as he [illegible]ed at the shrinking form of his sister.

Another impatient ring had echoed through the house, and before the girl could make reply to the appeal of her brother, the door was flung open and a man crossed the threshold. It proved to be DeKane, who had overhauled the cabby and learned of the whereabouts of the runaway maid. The theatrical manager was a florid, sinister-looking chap, one to whom our boy hero took a sudden dislike.

"Isabel, I want you!"

This command caused the girl to shrink and stand trembling.

"You cannot have her," at once spoke Gordon. "She goes with me from here. She is my sister, and I shall not consent to her going again on the stage. You may feel thankful that I do not have you arrested for kidnaping her from her home."

Much more the boy might have said had not the visitor laid a hand on the arm of Nada and led her to the door. He thrust her across the threshold, then turned to face an angry boy.

"Not a word, youngster," warned the heavy-voiced DeKane. "You interfere with the DeKane Opera Company at your peril."

The speaker shook a clenched hand in the face of Gordon. Then, turning abruptly, he passed outside. Gordon sprang instantly after, only to find himself confronted by a policeman, who held him while a cab rolled away with his sister and her pretended father.

Defeated again, Gordon Greaves was quite despondent for the moment. He attempted to explain to the street official, but could get nothing of a satisfactory nature from that person. The boy's first thought was to follow the cab and make another attempt to wrest Nada from her pretended friends.

Gus Ellis came out at this moment, however, and Gordon turned to him for advice. The two returned inside and sat talking over the events of the night.

"I don't know if you can do anything," said Ellis, "if the girl is satisfied to remain where she now is. She evidently believes she has found her father."

"But she has not."

"How can you be sure of that, my boy?"

"Why, because that fellow is a low-down, [illegible] scoundrel," broke forth Gordon in violent wrath. "If he were her father he would never have taken her by force as he did. Besides, such a scamp could never be of the [illegible] blood as gentle little Nada."

"Th[illegible] [illegible]," and Ellis sat musing. "She se[illegible] [illegible]ed with her present lot. [illegible]"

"At [illegible] but when I reminded her of all [illegible] folks had done for her, she [illegible] that she had [illegible] I shan't rest till I [illegible]"

"Well, [illegible]ht," advised Ellis. "Tomorrow things [illegible] wear different colors."

Gordon [illegible]'s [illegible] and went to [illegible] house, where he tossed in restless [illegible] morning.

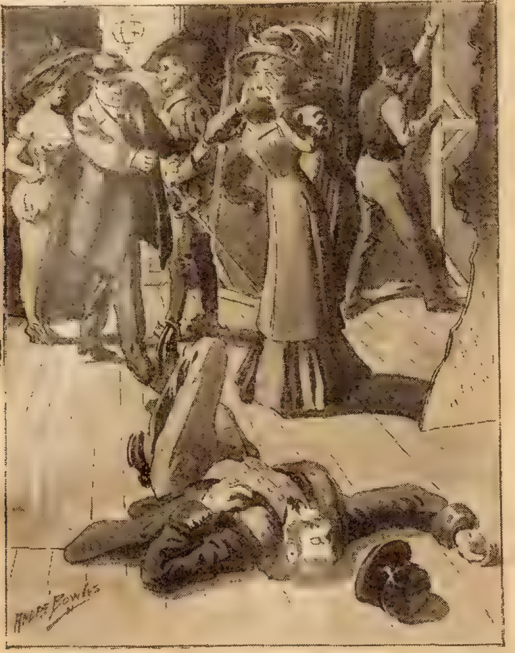
Gordon found the people where Gus Ellis boarded very nice indeed, and when the next day Mrs. Harkland dismounted from a bus at the door, he was agreeably surprised to learn that the family were old friends of the dead secretary of State [illegible].

"I am ever so glad to see you [illegible], Gordon," said the delicate lady as she held the boy's hand at parting. "If you can get your sister's consent to come here and visit me I shall be more than pleased."

Gordon left the presence of Mrs. Harkland, elated and hopeful.

On calling at the hotel where members of the opera company stopped he learned to his dismay that the management had cancelled the engagement and crossed the river into Canada. Here was a serious state of affairs. He made inquiries and learned that Isabel was with the company when it departed. Of course this move had been made to circumvent him, and Gordon was fully convinced that his suspicions as to the claims of DeKane with regard to Nada were without foundation. He was a villain who wished to profit by the beauty and talent of Nada. By some means he had learned the story of the foundling babe and had plotted accordingly. For nearly a year the rascal had succeeded in his plans. Gordon had noticed the face of the detestable Captain Cele Stayne among the members of the company, and now well understood the cause of his enmity toward himself. He was plainly an accomplice of DeKane's, and had been one of the kidnapers.

Having studied out the exact situation, Gordon was more determined than ever to pursue his present course and rescue Nada from the clutches of a pair of scheming villains.



DeKane fell to the floor.

The boy had noticed among the members of the opera company a comely woman of middle age, who seemed very close to the manager. Gordon had seen her on the stage and her face had attracted him strangely. Somehow he fancied her countenance reminded him of some one he had seen in the past.

Gordon's next move was on the Dominion of Canada. He crossed the ice and soon located the DeKane Opera Company. Nada was not of the number, however. She had been spirited away, he believed, to a safe retreat, and his spirits again sank. Night fell and the boy sought the theater. It was a new play, but Isabel Fontaine was not of the cast. Having satisfied himself on this score, the boy searcher returned to the hotel.

Nada had seemed willing to accompany him, and Gordon was convinced that she was being held against her will at some place which it was his determination to locate.

He was sauntering near the river when a jingle of bells attracted his attention. A sleigh, containing a small party, swept past toward the icy surface of the river.

"Once we get across to the American side we'll be all right."

The voice arrested instant attention. Gordon had heard it before, yet he was not quite sure as to whereabouts. As the sleigh plunged down the incline Gordon sprang after, seized the back of the rear seat, and planting his feet firmly on the curled heel of the runner, was carried swiftly along. The occupants of the rig—two females and a man—were heavily muffled, so as to be unrecognizable, even had they been known to him.

"Loring will murder me if he catches me after this," said a woman's voice. "But I couldn't stand it any longer, Isabel. When I knew you wished to escape from the company, I felt it time to act. Loring has not been good to me of late. Now that you are satisfied that he is not your father you will never consent to stop with the company."

"No, no," uttered the girl. "It is dreadful to think I have been so long with that man, thinking all the time that he was my father. How could I have been so deceived?"

"Very easily, my dear. When he raised his hand to strike you today I made up my mind to tell you the truth, Isabel. DeKane is no relative of yours, although he married into the family."

Gordon pricked up his ears, listening intently.

"But about my father? He is dead you tell me?"

"Oh, yes, he has been dead a long time."

"And my mother?"

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"I would rather not talk about her."

Silence then fell. The creaking sleigh and jingling bells made discordant music. Gordon was well pleased at the turn affairs had taken. Nada, or Isabel as she seemed pleased to call herself, was escaping from the man who had deceived her into the belief that he was her father. She would, of course, seek her old home, and he decided to stand ready to conduct her thither when the time for action arrived. This woman, who was aiding the girl to escape, was the one he had seen with the opera company, and whose face seemed strangely familiar.

"Where will you take me?" asked the girl as the sleigh entered upon American soil.

"To a friend on Spruce street—the Opendalls."

Again Gordon started. It was at the Opendalls that she and he had found refuge on the previous evening. So this theatrical woman knew them

The sleigh sped down the river, up across the higher ground, and finally halted before a house on East Spruce street. This was the place where his friend, Gus Ellis, was stopping, and where Mrs. Harkland had visited that morning. Gordon wondered if the widow was still there. She had expressed a desire to meet Nada, and, if she still tarried, there was sure to be a meeting.

A brilliant electric light flamed over the entrance to the Opendall home and when the driver sprang to the ground Gordon saw his face. He was surprised to recognize an old acquaintance, no less a person than Tom Alway, the belligerent nephew of the Branyards

"Hello! What you doing here?" cried Tom, seeing Gordon for the first time as he sprang from the rear of the sleigh.

Our friend made no reply, but proceeded to assist the ladies to alight. Nada recognized Gordon with a pleased gasp of surprise.

"You here, Gordon! How glad I am. I am ready to go home with you now. Thanks to Mrs. DeKane, I am free at last."

Gordon turned and gazed intently at the face of Nada's companion.

"I have seen you before, Mrs. DeKane," said he.

"You are——"

"Gordon Greaves, my brother, Mrs. DeKane," said Nada quickly.

"Ah, yes," said the woman. "Is it possible you can remember?"

A sudden light flashed into the brain of Gordon Greaves.

"Yes, do remember'" he exclaimed, deeply excited. "You are the woman who came to our house on the Clearwater almost fifteen years ago, at night, and in a storm. You left a babe, little Nada. I shall never forget that, madam. You called yourself the mother of the infant. Was it true?"

"No, it was not true. I was the babe's nurse. I stole her to revenge myself on a haughty relative. I was mad at the time. Let the past rest. I must bid you good-by Isabel," and the woman held out her hand. The girl bent and kissed it reverently.

The young driver of the sleigh now put in his oar.

There seems to be a personal reunion of nice people here," he said, touching the arm of Gordon Greaves. "What say to our making up, now that the time is ripe? I want you to forgive me for that little fracas at Branyard's farm."

Gordon accepted the proffered hand.

"All right, Tom," he said, "I am agreed to that since you have been so useful in the present emergency. Tell me where you live and I will call on you. I might have forgiven you sooner, only——"

"Only you was smarting under my insolence. That's all right, old chap. Since that time I have seen myself as a blatant little fool. I'm doing well in this north country and you may tell Cousin Greta and Uncle Silas so when you see them again."

With another shake of the hand Tom Alway got into the sleigh and intimated to Mrs. DeKane that he was ready to go.

"Good-by again, Isabel, and may Heaven ever bless you," fervently uttered the woman. At the same time a tear started down her cheek.

"You're not going like this," commanded Gordon. "You shall come inside and rest and visit my friends"

"No, no," protested the woman, "I must return at once, before my absence is discovered. Should my husband come here you know how to deal with him, Gordon."

"You bet I do. Now that Nada is willing to quit the show I'll fight Satan and all his imps to protect her."

"Mrs. DeKane, tell me one thing," cried Nada suddenly. "Am I Nada or Isabel?"

"Both," answered the actress. "Your mother named you Evangeline Isabel Nada, so you can take your choice."

"And my family name is?"

The street door opened and Gus Ellis appeared. He seemed to understand the situation and called to the company on the walk to come inside.

"Mrs. Harkland is anxious to see your sister, Gordon."

"Mrs. Harkland, did you say?" cried the actress. "You do not mean Jerome Harkland's widow?"

"The same," returned Ellis. "Do you know her?"

"Yes, and I will go in to her with Nada," said the woman huskily.

CHAPTER XX.

CONFESSION AND REPENTANCE.

The stately Mrs. Harkland sat at a little table consulting an ancient diary as our friends were ushered into the room by Gus Ellis.

The rich woman was in an apparently sorrowful mood, as tears were coursing down her pale face, and her eyes were red from considerable weeping. She closed the book and turned to the newcomers, an assumed smile chasing the tears from her countenance

"I have fetched 'em, Mrs. Harkland," cried Ellis, with the proud exuberance of a schoolboy. "This is Gordon, of course, you know him, and this young lady is—ah, let me see—Nada Greaves, Gordy's very good chum and sister. She has been wrested from her abductors and will now return to her rightful home."

The rich lady took Nada by the hand and looked deeply into her eyes.

"So this is Nada," she mused. "I have heard so much about you, dear child. I trust you will be good hereafter and not roam from home."

"Yes, that is what I mean to do," assured the girl, somewhat abashed.

The ex-secretary's widow continued to clasp the hand of Nada, and to regard her fixedly. "So like, so like!" she murmured. "How old are you, Miss Greaves?"

"She will be sixteen in June."

It was Mrs. DeKane who spoke, now advancing and facing the lady. Her chin was lifted, and a half smile half frown mantled the not unhandsome face of the actress.

Mrs. Harkland dropped the hand of Nada and stared wide-eyed at the last speaker. Presently her countenance blanched to the hue of death. She seemed about to faint.

"Don't be frightened, Lavinia," spoke the actress in a caressing voice. "You are not mistaken; I am Annette, your wicked cousin who, instead of perishing in the burning house fifteen years ago, escaped in the excitement and went out of your life, I believed, forever. You have not forgotten that dreadful night of fire in the woods, Lavinia?"

"Forgotten! Ah, Heaven knows that scene will be with me forever," and again tears coursed down the cheeks of the rich widow. "Annette, Annette, can this truly be you? How could we be mistaken? We found bones in the ashes; they must have been my cousin's. You are not Annette, but a base impostor. Yet you do resemble my poor cousin very much."

"And I am she. Look, you haven't forgotten that," and the speaker leaned forward disclosing on the white neck, below the collar, a ragged scar, shaped like a crescent moon. "You know how that was done. When we were children together you, in a fit of anger, struck me with a ragged pine knot; you haven't forgotten, Lavinia!"

"No, no," with a low gasp. "You are Annette truly. But how can you reveal yourself here and tell me all this, knowing how I shall feel because you saved your own life and let little Evangeline perish in the awful fire?"

Mrs. Harkland was recovering her presence of mind somewhat. She seemed less glad to know that her cousin lived than one might suppose.

"I thought you my best friend, Annette," she went on. "You know how I trusted you with the babe; and during the time, you were untrue to me. Why was it, Cousin Annette?"

"It was because of Jerome," and the actress bowed her head as if in shame and contrition

"Jerome!" exclaimed the widow. "Why, he was ever kind to you, as gentle and thoughtful of your well being as a brother."

"That is all true," admitted the other. "It was because of his kindness that I made a mistake; I thought it was me instead of you he cared most for. I was fool enough to let him know my thoughts and then he did what he had a right to do, spurned me as I deserved. I became chagrined and angry. It was then I plotted revenge. When the fire came I stole from the house and fled——"

"Leaving Evangeline to perish miserably!" moaned the widow. "I can never forgive you for that, Annette."

"But listen. It was not as you suppose. I took the child with me, and escaping from the fire, made haste to a place of safety. After a few days the rain fell, the fires were extinguished and it was safe for me to go whither I pleased. I wandered in the woods all one day and part of one night."

"But Evangeline?"

Mrs. Harkland leaned toward the actress, biting her red lips to quell her emotions.

"I left her in good hands, Lavinia."

"I ought not to trust you——"

"I am ready to leave it to the girl herself," broke in Annette. "She can testify to the goodness of Mr. and Mrs. Greaves, who brought her up as their own child. Nada, step up and take your mother by the hand."

The actress turned to the girl, who moved forward and gazed timidly into the face of Mrs. Harkland.

"Are you my own mother?" queried Nada, lifting her blue eyes in tender pleading. "I have dreamed so many times of her, but he told me she was dead. Oh, I hope it's true!"

For one brief minute the rich woman hesitated. She read again the lineaments of Nada's sweet young face. A glad light suddenly swept across the countenance of Mrs. Harkland. With a great cry she put forth her hands.

"You have Jerome's eyes, his chin—you are Evangeline, my own precious child!" burst from the lips of the doubly bereaved woman.

Nada did not hesitate an instant, but sprang to the waiting arms of her mother Sob after sob fell on the ears of the little assembly. Gordon, who had been the means of bringing this all about, stood at one side, viewing the whole scene with a feeling of awesome delight.

* * * * * * * * * *

A steamship, crossing Lake Michigan in May bore three very happy people. The wealthy Mrs. Harkland, her daughter Evangeline—our Nada of other days—and Gordon Greaves, who had come not long since from the presence of Greta Branyard, having repaid her loan and told again the joyful story of the termination of his pursuit of his sister's kidnapers.

Gus Ellis was there at the farm, and when Gordon was coming away the young man confided to him the fact that Greta had promised to become his wife at some future time.

"I am to manage Mr. Branyard's business from now on, my boy. With what I know of scientific farming I am sure to make a grand success of the work. Even a collegiate sometimes takes to the soil, you know."

"Especially when there is such a nice girl in the case as Greta," returned Gordon laughing.

The Harklands were going to Michigan to visit Gordon's parents, to reward them for the good bringing up they had given Nada. The widow was happy, Gordon was elated, yet not quite pleased to know that he no longer had a sister, and that she was worlds above him in a social life.

The Greaves were overjoyed at the outcome of their son's hunt for Nada's captors.

Evangeline went to live in the city with her mother. Gordon could no longer find pleasure in common things on the Clearwater. He educated himself at a city school, entered business and soon made his mark in the busy world of commerce.

Evangeline and her mother did not forget the boy who had so persistently sought to rescue his foster-sister from the hands of bad men. They met often, and when Gordon felt himself competent to care for a home of

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AGENT'S DIRECTORY LIST, INDIANA, Indiana County, PENNA

his own he laid his heart at the rich girl's feet.

"I have always cared for you, Gordon," confessed Nada. "I think I can be truly happy as the wife of a stirring business man like yourself. Mother will approve, and——"

"And she shall find a home with us, of course."

From the hour that Mrs. Harkland and her daughter and Gordon quitted Chicago for Michigan, Annette, DeKane and the infamous Captain Cele Stayne never again entered their lives.

The end.

WITH HANDSOMER MAN.

BY BERTHA ORVILLE.

This struggle to live up to other people's ideals instead of your own is maddening. William's good—too awfully good, most—but, oh, I wish he were not quite so much of a minister!"

Belinda Norton wiped the traces of tears from her woe-begone little face and listlessly took up the week's mending.

When she became engaged to William it had given her a little thrill of exaltation not unmixed with exultation to be chosen by a man with such high ideals and such an earnest purpose in life.

And when, as his wife, she had come to this little provincial town, it was very flattering to be at the head of everything and receive deference from silver-haired people.

But the novelty was wearing off and she sighed for the pomps and vanities of her former life.

Her yearning for excitement had been fed by the decorating of the town with flamboyant posters heralding the coming of the "Greatest Show on Earth."

"Mayn't we—well, I suppose you couldn't and wouldn't—but mayn't I go to the circus, William?" she pleaded.

"Oh, Belinda, it wouldn't do. Not here, you know. I am afraid they wouldn't approve."

"So you think it shows depravity to want to go to a circus and do you think it would hurt me to go?" she demanded.

"No, Belinda, but that isn't the point. You see these people—our people, you know, dear—do not look at things as you do and I who are city bred. It's more a question of taste than morals. It wouldn't seem becoming for a minister's wife to go to a circus, I fear. I am sorry, but you mustn't go."

The young minister spoke with professional tone and departed to make a call at Deacon Price's, leaving his wife shrinking from him in spirit and with a fierce, sudden rebellion.

A shadow fell across the open doorway. She looked up. The shadow was cast by an extremely handsome young man.

"Why, Jack! Jack Morris!" she cried, bursting into a torrent of tears.

"Why, Belinda, little girl, what is it?" he cried, coming quickly to her. "Aren't you happy? Isn't he"—his voice growing hard—"good to you?"

"Oh, yes. He thinks he is, but he wants me to be good, too, and I can't. I feel like doing something dreadful. I was just wondering if I couldn't run away, and I looked up and saw you, and it carried me back to the old days, and I just couldn't help crying, that's all. I am so glad to see you!"

"You must tell me," he said firmly, sitting down beside her and taking her hand, "what the trouble is."

"Oh, Jack, I haven't been anywhere except church and lectures and circles since I came to Oxley, and there's a circus here today, and William says I mustn't go!"

Jack turned away to conceal a smile. What a little girl she still was, after all.

"Never mind, Linda," he said, dropping into the old-time shortening of her name. "The circus was unloading as I came by. It's a punk show. One toothless lion, a couple of dejected camels and a blind elephant."

"I don't care!" said Belinda miserably. "They'd look good to me, better than chickens and cows."

"See here, Belinda, I only dropped off here in passing through. Go back with me to the city for a day and a night and we will have a good time."

"Oh, Jack," her eyes growing big and bright. "I wish I dared! I might slip away for the day, but the night——"

"There's a league baseball game on this afternoon, and a circus tonight. Then we'll have a little supper—the folks are all away. You can——"

"I am going," she said resolutely. "I'll leave a note for William."

"Did you tell him where you were going and whom you were going with?" he asked on the way to the station.

"No; I didn't. I said I was going away with a handsomer man, and I might be back tomorrow."

"Oh, I say, Belinda, you rubbed it in!"

"I don't care! I want him to feel as unhappy as I did; to make him feel that I don't care if the flock know I went to a circus."

While she was gazing out of the window and Jack was in the smoker, she overheard a man in the seat behind her saying to his companion:

"Yes; I've been visiting my brother Ezra down at Oxley for a day. The little town's grown. They've got a big new school and a church without debt. Think of that once! It's packed to the door. Ezra says it's through the new minister. I met him today. He's just a prince of a fellow!"

Belinda's heart leaped.

"And Ezra says he's got a wife to match. That though she's very young, she's a good helpmeet and interested in the church and the people. She was a city girl, too."

"Must be awful for her to live at Oxley."

"Ezra says they appreciate that and they are going to show her they do some day."

When Jack came in from the smoker he encountered an entirely different looking Belinda.

"Jack, at the next station we meet a train going back to Oxley. I am going to take it."

"Why, Linda?"

"Don't say a word to me, Jack. I am ashamed of myself for coming this far."

Jack knew of old what it meant when her mouth became a straight line, so he made no further remonstrance.

When Belinda walked into the house she saw her husband sitting by the window, her note spread open before him. His manner was one of deep dejection.

"I—I didn't go far—William—only to the second station," she said meekly.

His eyes brightened.

"I'm glad you got back in time for the first performance of the circus. All through my visit with the deacon I was thinking of your disappointment and how little pleasure you could have here. Finally the deacon asked me what was on my mind. When I told him, he said, 'Why, let the child go. She can go with us.'

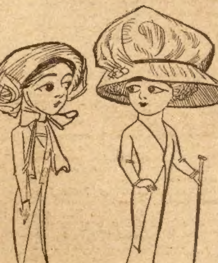
"I told him I had hesitated because I thought the people here might not approve, and he said they were all going and they'd feel much more comfortable if they had the sanction of the preacher in the attendance of his wife. So I got tickets, dear, and we will both go.

"And, dear, since I have been sitting here, I see that I have given you all work and no play, and I am not going to do so any more. I think with the increase in my salary we can afford a horse and phaeton."

"Oh, William!" and then with a sidelong glance, "did you guess who the handsomer man was?"

"Of course, dear. You told me once that there was only one man you know that was handsomer than I, and that was your brother Jack."

Girls! Girls!



Miss Catchem—George proposed no less than four times before I accepted him!

Miss Sharpe—To whom?

Woman's Winning Ways.

To attract a man is one thing; to retain him and command his respect is quite another.

A woman's smile, for example, attracts a man, but an even temper retains him.

A pretty gown attracts a man; the knowledge that it was inexpensive delights him.

A pleasant manner attracts a man; brightness of brain holds him.

A knowledge of how, when and where to be a little stately attracts a man; an appreciation of the folly of frivolity wins his respect.

A consideration for his comfort attracts a man; a continuation of this makes him your most devoted slave.

Without stretching the truth some men's talk is long drawn out

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Fits or Falling Sickness

November 18, 1909.

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DR. F. E. GRANT, Dept. 71 Kansas City, Mo.

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Please tell me about the remedy you used to cure your husband, as I am personally interested in one who drinks.
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Just in order to demonstrate beyond any question or doubt that our Straight Kentucky Whiskey has no equal at any price for purity, wholesomeness, mellowness and whiskey quality, we make the above offer, which is the final word that can be said by any distiller on price and quality. We are registered distillers and know the whiskey business from start to finish, and know that once you try these goods you will want no other.

Notice the announcements of other distillers and mail order whiskey houses, and see if they offer **Straight** Kentucky Whiskey, see if they guarantee or even state that their whiskey is no blend, no compound or mixture. While you probably know what straight whiskey means, yet we wish again to state that straight whiskey means exactly what the word implies—**straight**—not blended with cheap wines, etc., to reduce price per quart—not compounded with adulturated mixtures, but every drop **straight whiskey and nothing but whiskey!**

Some other distillers do offer Straight Kentucky Whiskey, but just look at their prices in comparison with ours.

We have noticed this blended, adulturated stuff sold under the name of whiskey for some time, and believe it a good business step on our part to make an offer that even the dealers in adulturated trash cannot equal, in order to quickly induce all whiskey purchasers to try our **Straight Kentucky Whiskey** and see the difference.

IN DEFIANCE OF ACTUAL COST

You will notice that some whiskey houses have resorted to giving a present as an inducement to get your order for their whiskey. When you buy whiskey, make the quality of the goods and price get your order—no need of giving premiums with whiskey if you are right on price and quality.

This unheard-of offer is made in defiance of actual cost to us. Now, then, we absolutely guarantee this whiskey to be **Straight Kentucky Whiskey**—so pure and mellow that it will cost you not less than from $3.50 to $4.00 per gallon to duplicate in the regular way. Send us $4.75, either Express or P. O. Money Order, Registered Currency or St. Louis Exchange (no personal checks, we cannot afford to pay exchange on them) and we will at once ship you 12 full **quart** bottles (3 gallons) of this superior Straight Kentucky Whiskey. After receiving the whiskey, put it to any test you like, and if not entirely satisfactory, do not hesitate to return them and get your money back at once. **Every statement in this announcement is backed by a company with a $500,000 paid-up capital.**

$1,000 OFFER We offer $1,000 to anyone who can prove through any test, whatever, that this whiskey is not Straight Kentucky Whiskey, or that we do not refund the money to anyone requesting it according to above conditions. Remember, we ship all goods same day order is recieved. You can make your remittance payable and address your letters to the firm, or to the manager, and they will receive immediate attention.

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YOUR HEART

Does it **Flutter, Palpitate** or **Skip Beats?** Have you **Shortness of Breath, Tenderness, Numbness or Pain** in left side, **Dizziness, Fainting Spells, Spots before eyes, Sudden Starting in sleep, Nervousness, Nightmare, Hungry or Weak Spells, Oppressed Feeling in chest, Choking Sensation in throat, Painful to lie on left side, Cold Hands or Feet, Difficult Breathing, Dropsy, Swelling of feet or ankles, or Neuralgia around heart?** If you have one or more of the above symptoms, don't fail to use **Dr. Kinsman's Celebrated Heart Tablets**, the remedy which has made so many marvelous cures. Not a secret or "patent" medicine. One out of four has a weak or diseased heart. Three-fourths of these do not know it, and thousands die who have been wrongfully treated for the **Stomach, Lungs, Kidneys or Nerves.** Don't drop dead like hundreds of others when **Dr. Kinsman's Heart Tablets** will cure you.

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JOHN M. SMYTH CO. 150-207 West Madison Street, CHICAGO

HIS FIRST CASE.

A reminiscent look came into Garret's eyes as he read the letter bearing the postmark of an up-state town. It carried him back to his early life of toil on a farm where he had earned the money for college.

From college, by a stroke of fortune, in attracting the favorable notice of Judge Larned he had been taken into a law office where he had assisted in the preparation of many a case, but his first case, one in which he would have entire and undivided sway, was yet to be, and to the gaining and winning of this case he had a great incentive

The incentive now darkened the doorway, and a charming laugh rippled in, calling him back from the land of meadows.

"Denise," he cried, starting to his feet, his eyes luminous.

"I am glad to have caught you dreaming for once, Garret. You are so strenuously industrious and practical."

"My life hasn't been of the stuff that dreams are made of," he replied.

"Were you dreaming," she asked with a fleeting glance, "of your first case?"

"No;" he replied, reluctantly forced to the truth. "The letter I just received carried me back to my early life—on a farm."

"You have never told me about those days," she said, reproachfully.

"There is little to tell. Such homely details—I was a ragged, hapless little chap, and I worked hard and grew up to be a gawky lad with a longing for the law. I saved enough to eke my way through college. Then your father took me in here. I met you, and now, O, Denise!"

"What is it, Garret? It isn't. O, dear, I see; it is—your first case!"

"Yes."

There was only time for a rapturous glance before her father, the judge, entered.

Garret read him the letter, which was from the son of a man who owned the farm on which Garret was raised, and who had advanced him the money to go to college. There were some complications in the will by which the young farmer had inherited his land, and a lawsuit was impending. He had written to Garret to employ his services.

Garret explained, at length, the details of the case, Denise listening with concentrated attention.

"Papa," she asked earnestly, "do you think Garret can win this case?"

"Frankly, I do not."

"Then, Garret," she said imploringly, "don't take it."

The young attorney looked at her with troubled eyes.

"Some way, it seems like a call to me, and fitting that my first effort in a legal way should be for the good of my friend and the son of my benefactor. He was my chum."

There was an assumption of vexation in her fair brow and pouting lips that enlightened the judge. He knew that Garret was "conditioned," and he concluded that the condition was the winning of his first case.

"He can win it, if it is to be won," predicted the judge. "He cannot refuse, of course."

The next day Garret went to the scenes of his early struggles in life to look over the ground. Two days later, he returned, going directly to the home of the judge where he found Denise alone. Her attitude was still reproachful—almost resentful.

"Well, Garret," she asked, "did you find any encouraging evidence?"

"I fear not. I ran up for the day to let your father's focusing eye magnify a little speck that I see. The farm belongs to my friend morally and I must see that it does legally."

"Why, of course," she said a little coldly, "if so much hinges on your winning your first case, you would naturally want to win."

"Denise," he replied earnestly, "as deeply as I love you our marriage is not the only incentive. My friend has a wife and babies. The loss of all his property would wreck a happy little household."

Her eyes were turned persistently from him.

"I must go to the office now," he said after a slight pause. "I go back tonight."

Her farewell was in a frigid tone, and he went away, depressed by her lack of sympathy and understanding. It took the entire day for the judge to go over the tangled evidence with him, and he barely made his train.

"I will come out when the case comes to court if you wish, Garret," volunteered the judge. "I may see a point here and there to suggest."

"O, judge, it is more than I dared ask," exclaimed Garret gratefully. "It is awfully kind——"

"Well," said the judge, "it seems to be a matter of importance to my family that you win."

Then noting the wince in the young man's eyes, he added kindly, "You mustn't put too much importance on a young woman's pique. Her heart is all right."

Two weeks later, the judge informed Denise of his intention.

"I shall go with you, papa," she announced.

"That's a good idea, Denise. Your presence will sustain Garret even more than will mine."

But when they reached the little country town the night before the trial, she decided to keep her presence a secret from Garret.

The courtroom was already crowded when she entered, and she sought standing room at the rear of the room. Her eyes, eagerly searching for a glimpse of Garret, encountered him talking to his client.

Suddenly the little mist of resentment cleared, and her heart went out to him anew. The deputy sheriff who had met her at the hotel came up and escorted her to a seat in the second row from the circle where were the lawyers, the client and his friends.

Denise looked interestedly at her rival, the client. He was a lank, honest-eyed fellow. The look in his homely face when he turned to his wife quite transformed his expression and found instant response in Denise's warm little heart. She asked the sheriff to tell Garret to come to her.

At the tap on his shoulder Garret turned and saw her.

"Garret," she whispered, her heart aglow at the lovelight in his eyes as he slipped into the seat beside her. "I hope you will win the case."

"And if I don't, Denise?"

"Why, then, dear, we won't count this case as your first. And, Garret, I want you to win—for his—for your friend's sake."

He pressed her hand and then went on the case with the best reinforcement a man can have.

"How did you happen to come, Denise?" he asked as they were leaving the courtroom.

"Papa thought you would lose, and I thought if you did you would need my consolation. And you won against such odds, he says. I am so glad that——"

"That—what, sweetheart?'

"That I said 'yes' before you won."

Be Cheerful at Table.

It is astonishing to one who has not studied the subject thoughtfully to learn how completely under control of the nervous system, or rather of the emotions, the entire digestive apparatus is.

It is a matter of everyday experience that the appetite is under the subjection of the feelings, although not of the will. The impulse to celebrate any good news by a dinner is founded upon the fact that when one is pleased and elated hunger is excited. In early times this hunger was gratified on the moment, just as the accompanying thirst too often is now, but the modern man usually defers his eating to a suitable occasion.

The loss of appetite caused by bad news or misfortune of any kind is too well known to need more than mention. Worry or physical fatigue will often act in the same way. The same causes that destroy the appetite will arrest or greatly retard the process of digestion. It is a matter of common experience that any disagreeable occurrence during or after a meal will stop digestion and may bring on a bilious attack with headache, nausea and coated tongue. Concentration of the mind or anxiety will act in the same way.

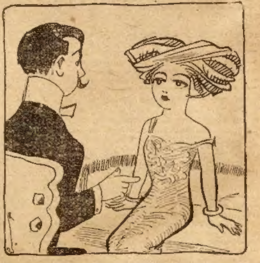
On the other hand, as the appetite is stimulated by good news and mental elation, so digestion is favored by whatever promotes gayety and high spirits.

"Laugh and grow fat," like so many popular sayings, is an expresson which contains much truth. Dyspepsia is a malady that will seldom be found in the family where the dinner gives occasion for cheerful talk and mirth and where all worry and "disgruntlement," and especially quarreling, are under a ban.

Every member of the family should make it an absolute rule to put worry and all thoughts of business or study aside for the moment and come to the table prepared to be light-hearted and gay. This is not only a moral duty, but rests upon the very physical reason that his appetite will be better and his food will taste better and will be better digested.

In this connection it goes without saying that bills and disagreeable letters should never be the accompaniment of the morning meal, because a day started with chagrin is a very hard day to straighten out.

Too Often.



Husband—You never kiss me except when you want some money.

Wife—Well, isn't that often enough?

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A Simple, Safe, Reliable Way, and It Costs Nothing to Try.

Those who suffer from catarrh know its miseries. There is no need of this suffering. You can get rid of it by a simple, safe, inexpensive, home treatment discovered by Dr. Blosser, who, for over thirty-five years, has been treating catarrh successfully.

His treatment is unlike any other. It is not a spray, douche, salve, cream, or inhaler, but is a more direct and thorough treatment than any of these. It cleans out the head, nose, throat and lungs so that you can again breathe freely and sleep without that stopped-up feeling that all catarrh sufferers have. It heals the diseased mucous membranes and arrests the foul discharge, so that you will not be constantly blowing your nose and spitting, and at the same time it does not poison the system and ruin the stomach, as internal medicines do.

If you want to test this treatment without cost, send your address to Dr. J. W. Blosser, 27 Walton Street, Atlanta, Ga., and he will send you by return mail enough of the medicine to satisfy you that it is all he claims for it as a remedy for catarrh, catarrhal headaches, catarrhal deafness, asthma, bronchitis, colds and all catarrhal complications. He will also send you free an illustrated booklet. Write him immediately.

Only Avenue Open.

The busybody who had just moved into the fashionable neighborhood was in deep meditation.

"Ah, Archibald," she said, after a long silence, "I have it at last. We cannot afford to hire a pompous butler to learn the family secrets of our rich neighbors, but——"

"But what?" asked her husband, impatiently.

"We can subscribe to the telephone in this district. It is a party line."

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Mrs. de Jones—My baby spilled about a quart of ink on a lot of old rags, and a drop or two got on my best dress. Have you anything that will take ink out

Honest Druggist—I have many things that will remove ink from old rags, but I don't know of anything that will take ink out of a best dress.

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Send Name and Address Today —You Can Have It Free and Be Strong and Vigorous.

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This prescription comes from a physician who has made a special study of men and I am convinced it is the surest-acting combination for the cure of deficient manhood, and vigor failure ever put together.

I think I owe it to my fellow man to send them a copy in confidence so that any man anywhere who is weak and discouraged with repeated failures may stop drugging himself with harmful patent medicines, secure what I believe is the quickest-acting restorative, upbuilding, SPOT-TOUCHING remedy ever devised, and so cure himself at home quietly and quickly. Just drop me a line like this: Dr. A. E. Robinson, 3791 Luck Building, Detroit, Mich., and I will send you a copy of this splendid recipe in a plain ordinary envelope free of charge. A great many doctors would charge $3.00 to $5.00 for merely writing out a prescription like this—but I send it entirely free

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Pickled Peppers

Caught Wrong Man.

Bronson had stood for the milk being stolen about every other morning from the back stoop of his West Side home just about as long as he intended to. He made up his mind to catch the petty thief if he had to sit up all night to do it.

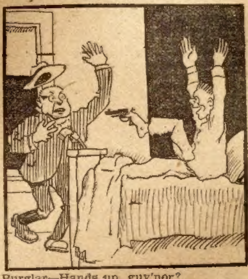
One morning he compromised by getting up about four o'clock taking a seat by the kitchen door, all done up in a big comforter to keep warm. Once or twice he dozed off, but he managed to keep fairly alert for the sound of the matutinal pilferer's footsteps. At last the steps sounded. The waiting man gave the intruder sufficient time to get clear up on the stoop. Then he flung open the door and faced his thieving visitor.

"Ah, ha," he cried, angrily, tauntingly, "so I've got you at last, eh?" He noticed that the man had a little wire arrangement for carrying milk bottles, as if he must be stealing them on a large scale. "And so," he added, "you not only steal my milk but you steal from all the neighbors, too, do you. Well, here's where you get your face punched. I'll—"

But the man outside then hurriedly placing a bottle of milk on the sill, raised a detaining hand. "Hold on there," he said. "Don't take me for any milk thief. I'm just the milkman—a little late this morning, but that's who I am."

And it was.

Clever Feat.



Burglar—Hands up, guv'nor?

Householder—Certainly! You didn't know I was the finger-toed freak from the circus, did you?—Comic Cuts.

In the Right.

"It's sorry Oi am to see yez goin' so soon," remarked Mrs. McShantee, as her guest, Mrs. McSquatter, arose to leave; "but as ye go through Mrs. Mickey Moylan's yarrud, w'u'd ye do me a favor?"

"Wid pleasure Oi wull," responded Mrs. McSquatter, leader of the Goatville Four Hundred. "Sure, I thort, bein' such near neighbors, you an' th' Moylans w'u'd be unfrindly."

"They're not at home th'day," explained Mrs. McShantee, "an' it isn't th' Moylans Oi want to see," she added, with suppressed emotion. "This morning Mrs. Moylan gave me ballyhoo wid her voil tongue, because moy chickens scratched up her yarrud."

"Phwy didn't ye soilence her?"

"Sure wasn't she in th' roight? Moy chickens had no call in her yarrud, an' pwhat cud Oi do but sthand an' take phwat she said. It's meek enough Oi am, Mrs. McSquatter, when Oi'm in the wrong. Y'll niver foihd me makin' throuble widout Oi have th' roight on moy soid. See?"

"Phwat is it ye want me to do as I pass through Mrs. Moylan's yarrud?" asked Mrs. McSquatter, with a puzzled air.

"Oi want yez ter open th' kitchen door an' let the billy goat out. They locked him in phwin they wint downtown."

"Sure, Oi will that."

"Thankee, Mrs. McSquatter, it's a good frind yez are. It won't be long before that billy goat gets over into this yarrud, and thin whin Mrs. Moyhan comes home—Hiven hilp 'er."

No Invitation Necessary.

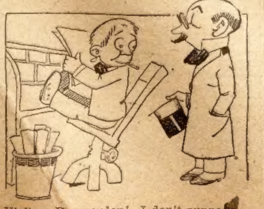
"There was a gentleman burglar at our house the other night," said a suburbanite with the snow shovel.

"Why do you call him a 'gentleman burglar'?" asked his neighbor.

"Because he was sociable. After he had gathered up all the valuables he came over to me and said: 'Shake!'"

"H'm! The one that visited me last week woke me up with a six-shooter and I shook without any invitation."

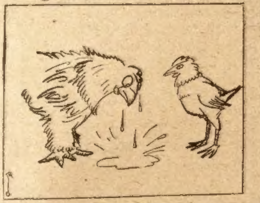
Posted.



Visitor—Beg pardon! I don't suppose you know when the boss will be in?

Office Boy—You bet your sweet life I do! If I didn't I wouldn't be sitting wit' me feet on de desk like dis.

Barnyard Gossip.



Mrs. Bantam—Do you think we return to dust after we pass away

Mrs. Cochin—My poor husband did. They made a feather duster out of his tail.

His Sacrifice.

The evangelist had got everybody worked up to a high pitch of emotional generosity. Men and women all over the church were throwing their possessions into the contribution plate. One man removed the pearl studs from the front of his shirt and placed them among the contributions. Another gave his watch and chain. One woman threw her diamond necklace into the plate, while from all sides came rolls of bills, scarfpins, jewels of all kinds.

"Those of you who have come unprepared," said the exhorter, during a lull in the proceedings, "will have time to go home and get their gifts, for I shall continue this meeting for three or four hours yet."

"Fine," said Bobbs, rising hurriedly, and starting for the door. "I'll be back in ten minutes, doctor," and out he sped.

The enthusiasm continued, and the great fund rolled up, and yet there were many who kept tab on Bobbs. He was not a generously disposed person as a rule, and they were interested to see what he would bring with him to devote to the cause, and they did not look in vain, for in less than the allotted time Bobbs returned—leading his mother-in-law by the hand!

Inappropriate Music.

A citizen of Greenwich village died the other day and the funeral in his home was a large affair. The minister arrived late and finding the room crowded seated himself in a rocking chair thrust in an inconspicuous corner to compose his mind for a moment.

Suddenly the strains of "There'll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight" filled the hushed room with clamor. The minister looked up shocked, but the tune banged on. A member of the family rushed over to the corner where the minister was seated and said in a horrified whisper:

"For heaven's sake, man, get up. You're sitting in the musical chair."

He had chosen an old-fashioned musical chair that played its one tune when any one sat in it and which the family supposed had been put in an out-of-the-way place.

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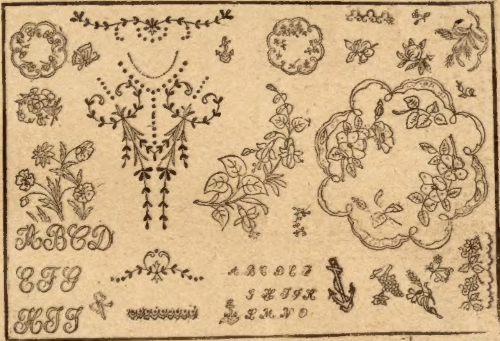

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This is a beautiful outfit that we have gotten together and we intend to give it free to anyone who will send us one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger. You know what good value the Chicago Ledger is, and with the offer of the free Embroidery Outfit, thousands of orders will pour into our office. This outfit will not be sold. To get it you must subscribe for the paper. If you are already a subscriber, send in a dollar any way, and we will extend your subscription one year from the time it now expires.

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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES

The King's Cup.

The so-called "loving-cup" is common nowadays and we see it everywhere. But many years ago there were no such things as these queer three-cornered affairs, and the following story tells how they first happened to be made:

Once upon a time, centuries before us there lived a great and powerful king who was extremely fond of hunting. He was one day in a huge forest pursuing a stag, but it was so fleet and clever that it eluded him and his band of followers, and led them entirely out of their way. After wandering about in a hopeless fashion they finally came upon a little hut and the king himself dismounted and rapped smartly upon the door.

A young girl answered his knock and soon showed the men the right path. The king was about to go when he saw a well near the house and at the sight of the clear water immediately felt thirsty, and going back, asked the girl for a drink. Without hesitation she went into the house and came out with an earthen jug filled with the well water. But, instead of offering his royal majesty the handle, as most people would, she held that herself and handed him the cup, the wrong way.

The king said nothing, thanked the girl and he and his band soon found their way out of the woods.

But when he reached his palace, he determined to reward the girl for giving him the water and at the same time to teach her a lesson in politeness.

Sending to his jeweler, he bade him make a silver cup with two handles and deliver it to the young girl without a word from whence it came.

Perhaps a month after this the king again hunted in that same forest, sought the little hut, and asked the girl for another drink of water.

This time she entered the house and came out with a beautiful silver cup full of sparkling water.

"Now," thought the king, "she has certainly learned a lesson." But never was he more mistaken, for the poor, ignorant girl took a handle in each hand and for the second time offered her liege lord nothing but the side of the cup.

The king rode away deely perplexed. He was still resolved to teach the girl the polite way to hand a cup without directly rebuking her, and many were the hours he spent in cudgeling his brains for some way in which to do it. At last a bright idea struck him, and he sent for his jeweler a second time.

"Make me," said he to the man, "a silver cup, heavily chased, and with my royal crest and put three handles on it."

The jeweler much surprised (for remember no such thing had ever been heard of up to this time), did as he was told, and soon the mug was finished. As before, the king had it privately sent to the girl who lived in the little hut.

One day not long after this for the third time he rode into that forest, and taking the now well known path soon reached the cottage. Dismounting he knocked at the door and asked humbly for a drink of clear water.

The girl immediately came out with the beautiful three-handled cup and taking two of the handles in her hands she offered him the third.

So the king rode away, well pleased with his strategy, and reaching home, ordered three-handled cups to be made in every sort of ware, and they became so popular that we now have them in all our shops and stores.

What Happened.

Once there was a snowflake that decided to fall upward for variety's sake. It was nearly on the ground when it came to that decision, but it acted promptly and turned right about. The people in the house into whose front yard it was about to fall didn't notice what it was doing, because they were too busy worrying about how they were to get the snow shoveled away. So it began sailing upward, and at once bumped into another snowflake which was sailing downward. You can imagine that when snowflakes bump the shock is not very terrific, so it simply apologized and went on its way. However, it soon found it was bumping into snowflakes all the time, and if it had not been a very determined snowflake and a natural leader it would have given up the enterprise and gone down with the rest. However, it kept on, and a snowflake that passed it said, "Hello! What's it up to, I wonder?"

"Up to the roof top by now," said a nice little snowflake, who didn't understand slang.

"Maybe it doesn't like the place we're falling to," said the snowflake. "Maybe I'll go up, too."

You know snowflakes are much like sheep—what one does the other do. You have probably noticed that when one snowflake comes sauntering down another and another follow, just to see where the first is going, and before you know it there is a regular snowstorm.

So, when this enterprising snowflake started going up, the one who had spoken about him followed, and then the nice little one turned and floated upward, too. Those that were coming down talked it over until they got near the ground, and then up they went to see what was happening. Then even those that were on the ground jumped up and followed—every one, except those that were melted. And the old gentleman who lived in the cottage put back his shovel and cried: "Three cheers! I don't need to shovel a path today."

That little snowflake went right back into the cloud, sailed off for half a mile and then tumbled right down as fast as he could in front of a house where a little boy named David Williams lived. The other snowflakes followed pell mell, they were so afraid of missing something, and as they all tried to fall on the very spot where the first snowflake had fallen, they formed a great tower of snow. David was the proudest boy in the country when he saw the beautiful snow tower in front of his house. He went around to all his friends and said "Come and see my North Pole!"

So they all came and marveled, and when the snow tower was frozen they climbed to the top, right in the clouds, and had a picnic there. And before they came down they planted the American flag on the top of the clouds, where it proudly waved until the spring.

How Many?

Olga was going to see her grandmother with her mother and she was all dressed in her best hat and coat—the brown ones that she wears on Sunday.

"By the way, have you a clean handkerchief?" asked her mother. That was usually the last thing she said when she went out with Olga.

"No," said Olga, cheerfully, "I haven't any more clean handkerchiefs. I guess they're all in the wash."

"All in the wash?" said her mother. "Why, they couldn't be. You must have about two dozen and you didn't use them all up last week. They must be somewhere in your bureau drawer."

But Olga and her mother both looked and there were no handkerchiefs in the pink case nor anywhere else.

"Why, whatever has become of them all?" asked Olga's mother.

"Maybe I have some in my coat pocket," said Olga, and she put her hand in one of the deep pockets of her coat.

"Yes, there's some here," she said, and she pulled out one, and then another, and another.

"Three in one pocket!" her mother exclaimed.

And then Olga put her hand in the other pocket and pulled out two, and in her dress pocket and pulled out three.

"Maybe there is more in my everyday dress and coat," said Olga, getting interested in the search.

Sure enough, there was one in the blue serge dress, and one in the gingham she wore yesterday, and three in the coat.

"I know there are some in the coat I wear when I play on the roof garden, too," said Olga, "but some of these will do. This one's clean."

"So that's where all your handkerchiefs were!" said Olga's mother. "About a dozen and a half in your various pockets!"

So now Olga puts a handkerchief in the wash every day and doesn't find herself without any in the middle of the week. How many handkerchiefs have you in your pockets at this moment?

The Fretful Porcupine.

The porcupine is not big, but it is dangerous company for all that. It can throw its quills into an enemy with the skill of a clever archer. And its quills are made in such a way that they bore their way into the flesh, burrowing deeper at every movement, and sometimes even causing death.

The porcupine is a queer little animal in its way of living. It dwells in deep burrows in the depth of the woods. It does not need water, as other animals do, but it subsists on a vegetable diet. It prefers to roam by night and is seldom seen, therefore, in the localities where it lives.

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